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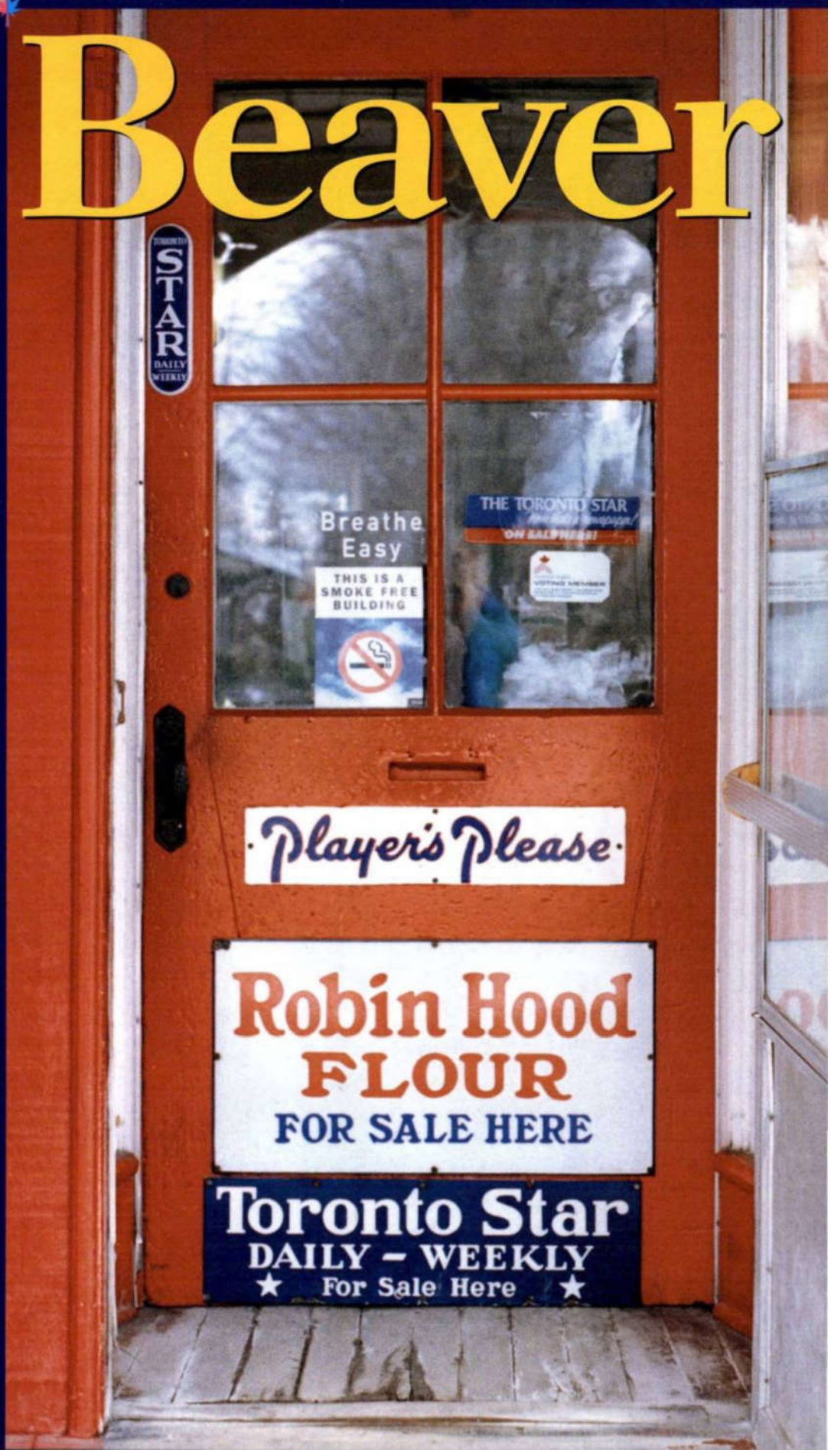

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On the cover: Front entrance of Cliff Byam's general store in Tyrone, Ontario. Photo by R.B. Fleming.

Letters

The *Beaver* welcomes readers' comments. E-mail us at <cnhs@historysociety.ca> or write to *The Beaver*, 478–167 Lombard Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3B 0T6. Please include your address and daytime phone number. Letters may be edited for clarity or length.

Worthy King bios

Chris Raible ["Booknotes," June/July 2002] wishes that someone would write a "serious biography" of William Lyon Mackenzie King, one that would eschew the "silly, and (mostly) inaccurate things about him." Perhaps the definitive biography of King for the twenty-first century has yet to be written. In the meantime, there are a number of very good studies in the library worthy of reading or rereading. Two of them, Bruce Hutchison's *The Incredible Canadian* (1952) and Henry Ferns and Bernard Ostry's *The Age of Mackenzie King* (1955), I recommend for their insight and reading pleasure. Both were reissued in softcover in the 1970s. The former was written by one of Canada's most talented journalists after observing King's career from 1921 to the end. Ferns and Ostry analyzed King's life from childhood to Liberal Party leadership in 1919 from a left politico-economic perspective. The books nicely complement each other in their chronology and viewpoint. For Hutchison, "this least typical of Canadians summed up by his own contradictions the whole amorphous life stuff of the Canadian creaturehood."

Ferns and Ostry admired King's skills in spite of himself. "He told Rockefeller he was indispensable to Laurier and he told Laurier he was indispensable to Rockefeller. If he was careful to make the right friends, he was also judicious in making the right enemies. ... His enemies were by his own lights either mean reactionaries, or institutions disliked by the business interests or by a section of the Canadian labour hierarchy, or by both." The next biographer of this most successful prime minister in our history has some broad shoulders to stand on.

Bruce Conron
Scarborough, Ontario

And Katharine Hepburn as Queen Marie?

I very much enjoyed the article on Joe Boyle in your June edition. His heroic story filled my teenage years and sadly is one that typifies our aggravating national characteristic of ignoring or belittling Canada's accomplishments and our heroes. My father, Kim Beattie, wrote the first book on the life and deeds of Joe Boyle, *Brother, Here's a Man*. It was published by Macmillan in 1940 with a long and intimate foreword written by Queen Marie from her deathbed. It is a pity that my father's book was not mentioned in the "et cetera" addendum of the article.

Brother, Here's a Man was bought by MGM, and Spencer Tracy was cast as the lead. Unfortunately America's entry into the war put the project on hold. My father, who had some of the drive that propelled Joe Boyle, bought a house from the proceeds of the sale and promptly joined the 48th Highlanders for his second war.

Margaret Beattie Milne
Guelph, Ontario

More fighting Yanks

Your readers might appreciate knowing that Eric Knight, the American author of *Lassie Come Home*, served in Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry in 1918 as a signaller ["Maple Leaf Yanks," April/May 2002]. More on Knight's involvement with the regiment can be read in *First in the Field* by Jeffrey Williams, Vanwell Publishing, 1995.

Richard Macintosh
Comox, British Columbia

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From Miss Moneypenny's files

CHRISTOPHER MOORE'S ARTICLE "What's True About Intrepid?" [April/May 2002] wavers between "a cup half empty" and a "cup half full." Having read the MacDonald book, I can see where secrecy may have been carried to extremes. Notwithstanding, the people who worked with Stephenson held him in high regard. Due to the friendship between Commander Ian Fleming, Royal Naval Intelligence, and Intrepid, I suspect that the origin of the 007 identity for Fleming's creation James Bond rests in Intrepid's WW I regimental number, 7 007 58 (spacing is mine).

Bud Squair
Edmonton, Alberta

Falcons vs. Granites

DON'T BE TOO HARD ON THE CHA ["Attempt to rewrite history fails," June/July 2002, p. 5]. There was no attempt to rewrite history. The Winnipeg Falcons did indeed win the 1920 Antwerp Summer Olympic hockey tournament. However, an Olympic Congress in 1925 declared that the first Winter Olympics were those of 1924 and the Toronto Granites the first official gold medallists for hockey. Their decision unfortunately relegated the hockey played in the 1920 summer games to a demonstration sport.

Frank Cosentino
Eganville, Ontario

A humble background?

IN "RIGHT HONOURABLE MOMS" [April/May 2002], I must beg to differ on one point. The author quoted Brian Mulroney as saying he was too busy working and looking after his widowed mother and younger sisters to have time to ponder the larger questions of our country. He then stated that spoiled rich kids such as Pierre Trudeau and Lowell Murray had the time to ponder. He may have been taken in by the exaggerating Mulroney; I believe Mr. Murray came from a very modest Cape Breton coal-mining-town background and had to work while pondering.

Mr. Terry Haley
Sydney (Coxheath), Nova Scotia

ERRATA In the map accompanying "In the Footsteps of David Thompson" [June/July 2002], the Blaeberry River was identified incorrectly as entering the Columbia River near the Canada–U.S. border. In fact, it enters the Columbia approximately fifteen kilometres north of Golden, B.C.

The price of *The Patricias: The Proud History of a Fighting Regiment* by David J. Bercuson [Reviews, June/July 2002] was incorrectly stated; in fact, the retail price is $34.95.

The *Beaver* regrets the errors.

A descendant writes

I READ WITH GREAT INTEREST the article about Madeleine de Verchères [April/May 2002], as two people mentioned in it, Madeleine and Mme. Fontaine, are ancestral relatives of mine. My maternal grandmother was a descendant of André Jarret de Beauregard, half-brother of François Jarret de Verchères, Madeleine's father. André and his wife Marguerite Anthiaume were tenants at Verchères. André was killed in a skirmish with the Iroquois in 1691, leaving Marguerite, a thirty-nine-year-old pregnant widow, with six children, four under the age of ten. She married Pierre Fontaine the following April, six months prior to the incident at Verchères.

It is not surprising then, that she was apprehensive for her own safety and that of her children and newlywed husband when they arrived at the Fortress Verchères during the Iroquois siege. She could not afford to be as brave and heroic as Madeleine.

Donald M. Kent
Regina, Saskatchewan

L'etat, c'est le PMO

CHRISTOPHER MOORE'S ARTICLE "The Decline of the Back Bench" [February/March 2002] has particular resonance in today's emasculated Parliament.

In answering his own question of how backbenchers lost any authority to speak out, Mr. Moore correctly points to the process whereby the Canadian party leaders put themselves beyond recall by their own caucus through the process of being elected by the membership-at-large at conventions. In point of fact, this started in 1919 when King beat out Fielding for the Liberal leadership at a convention held in Ottawa. Since then the stranglehold over backbenchers has been tightened with a requirement that the PM sign nomination papers for party candidates. As Jeffrey Simpson points out in his book *The Friendly Dictatorship*, cabinet now serves only to rubberstamp decisions that are almost invariably dictated by unelected backroom geniuses in the PMO or PCO.

There is one detail where I might quibble with the author when he says this process is unique to Canada among parliamentary governments. That might have been true until recently, when the British Tory Party followed the Labour Party's practice of choosing their party leaders at conventions. So there is not much reason to believe they won't follow our example in future.

I was gratified to see Mr. Moore say that proportional representation would only make things worse by allowing the backroom boys (and girls) to control the very souls of candidates because they would dictate who gets on the party's priority list and their ranking in each province. If we want to go to a more representative electoral system, it should be some form of single transferable vote where voters will be able to fill in the names of their first and second choice. If a party candidate fails to receive 50 percent of the vote on the first count, then a second count including the alternate votes would become necessary. The biggest drawback with that approach is that it could delay results on election night. But at least it leaves the process entirely in the hands of voters.

A.K. Maclaren
Ottawa, Ontario

Edible bulbs

CONCERNING THE COMMENT about an alleged tulip-eating contest in Ottawa ["Tiptoe through the tulips," p. 4], such a thing is not impossible. Tulip bulbs are edible, and in fact were eaten in Holland during World War II to stave off starvation.

Perhaps the Dutch royal family sends us all those bulbs each year in gratitude for sparing them from having to eat them sixty years ago.

Robert K. Henderson
Author, The Neighborhood Forager (the complete guide to suburban wild edibles)
Chatham, Quebec

Bonanza

While William Hind's artworks make their progress around the country (see Hindsight, facing page), a collection of less-well-known (for the time being), but none the less impressive, historical artworks has recently made a progress to the vaults of the National Archives of Canada. The collection, containing more than 3,300 prints, 700 watercolours and drawings, 8 oil paintings, 2 turtledoves, and a partridge in a pear tree (okay, the birds bit isn't true) was amassed by Canadian-born scholar and collector Peter Winkworth, a long-time resident of London, who devoted himself for many years to rooting around the English countryside purchasing artwork with Canadian historical themes. Many of the watercolours and sketches were made on the fly by explorers who needed to prove to their investors back home that they were making progress. The art work was then often filed and forgotten. Despite their modest provenance, however, many of them are the single surviving record of some past person, place, or thing in the last four centuries. Winkworth sold his collection to the NAC for six million dollars, and the goodies are only now being unpacked. The collection will be made available to Canadians in various ways in years to come, but, in the meantime, there is a teaser at <www.archives.ca/03/0365/036502_e.html>: a selection of twenty sketches for on-line viewing.

City of New Westminster in flames, September 10, 1898, William Creech. Lithograph

Two hundred and forty-three years later

Today, as much as it is possible, scrupulous care is taken to enumerate, record, and inter the war dead as a matter of honour. It was not always so. The estimated half-million who died in the Seven Years' War – which, given the number of European powers and their colonies involved, is considered the first global war – are by and large unmemorialized. Until now.

In the Quebec City district of St-Roch this fall, Parks Canada is scheduled to officially inaugurate a new National Historic Site in the form of the Seven Years' War Cemetery, which is the only cemetery in the world bearing witness to the 1756–1763 conflict. During the siege of Quebec, mostly French combatants wounded in the Battle of the Plains of Abraham and the Battle of Ste-Foy were taken to the small Quebec General Hospital run by Augustinian nuns. In the hospital's adjacent cemetery, they buried approximately one thousand members of Montcalm's army in a common grave. (Some British soldiers, being Protestant, were buried nearby, just outside the boundaries of the Catholic cemetery.) The nuns, befitting members of a cloistered order, maintained the gravesite with no fanfare for the next 240 years. It was almost like a secret place. But for the last three years, thanks to the diligence of the nuns, who recorded every name of every soldier, and to the enthusiasm of Montreal historian Jean-Yves Bronze, who lit upon the nuns' archive and rekindled interest in New France's war dead, the cemetery has gained new life (so to speak). Last fall, the remains of Louis-Joseph, Marquis de Montcalm, commander of the French army in North America, were disinterred from their resting place in the chapel of Quebec City's Ursuline convent and reburied with his men in a specially built mausoleum at the Seven Years' War Cemetery. A memorial was built, too, inscribed with the names of the fallen soldiers, eighteen of whom represent the greatest concentration in the world of the Chevaliers de Saint-Louis, the highest military decoration of prerevolutionary France.

COMMISSION DE LA CAPITALE DU QUÉBEC, MARC-ANDRÉ GRENIER, 2001

The oldest war cemetery in Canada, the site – with its interpretive panels and plaques, mausoleum, and memorial – is now both a kind of open-air museum in honour of New France and a rustic island in the heart of Quebec City. Definitely worth the trip.

Climb every mountain (well, one)

That United Nations! Always declaring International Years of this and that. This year the UN has declared 2002 the International Year of Mountains –" an opportunity to take steps to protect mountain ecosystems." Folks here at *Beaver* HQ in Winnipeg aren't doing much to honour this occasion because, frankly, there isn't a mountain to be had for hundreds of miles in any direction. But things are hopping where you might expect them to be – in the Rockies. The IYM coincides nicely with the 175th anniversary of Scottish-born botanist David Douglas's first ascent of B.C.'s Mount Brown, which is considered the birth of mountaineering on the North American continent. Hence, on August 19, representatives of several mountaineering and outdoors organizations will meet at the summit of the Athabasca Pass in Jasper National Park and begin a commemorative ascent of Mount Brown. Care to join them? Follow the links in the official website, <www.mountains2002.org>.

Take the day off

August 1: To honour the 1834 abolishment of slavery in the British Empire. Shout hallelujah.

August 7: To celebrate the forty-third anniversary of the first TV broadcast of *Don Messer's Jubilee*. Get your dancing shoes on; get your Sunday best.

September 15: To commemorate the 1885 accidental death in St. Thomas, Ontario, of P.T. Barnum's elephant Jumbo, reportedly the largest elephant in captivity. Keep clear of moving trains.

September 19: To mark the 1648 opening by Jacques Boisdon of the first tavern in Quebec. Hoist a few.

Cars and boats and planes

And in our transportation heritage department (with a Hal David / Burt Bacharach twist), word has come that the oldest surviving Ontario-manufactured car (and likely the second oldest surviving Canadian-made car) – the 1901 Neff Steam Buggy – has returned to the land of the silver birch, home of the beaver. The buggy, built by Benton Neff in his foundary near Port Colborne, Ontario, was rescued from an area wrecking yard by a visiting Californian in 1953, restored, and maintained for years in Virginia. The American owner, mercifully, decided against willing it to Washington's Smithsonian Institution and instead bequeathed it to the Port Colborne Historical and Marine Museum, where it is now displayed for all to see.

Neff Steam Buggy

PORT COLBORNE HISTORICAL AND MARINE MUSEUM

Meanwhile, over at Winnipeg's Western Canada Aviation Museum, a replica of the Vickers Vedette, a small wooden "flying boat" designed and produced by Canadian Vickers of Montreal in 1924, has been installed – the only Vickers Vedette in existence today. The first aircraft manufactured in Canada, sixty were originally built. The biplanes were used by the RCAF and some provincial governments for forest inventory, fire patrol, and aerial photography. (Many of the topographical maps in use today are based on photographs taken from Vedettes.) They were succeeded by more versatile aircraft in the 1940s, and the remaining Vedettes were destroyed or made into boats.

The Vickers Vedette in service (top), and the replica on display at the Western Canada Aviation Museum.

And speaking of boats, the Dartmouth Ferry is celebrating 250 years of schlepping people and produce across Halifax Harbour. It's reportedly the oldest continuous saltwater passenger-ferry service in North America.

Ox with Red River Cart, c. 1870. Oil on board

Self Portrait, c. 1870. Oil on paper

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Hindquarters

Between 1862 and 1871, English-born artist William George Richardson Hind journeyed through the prairies, over the Rocky Mountains, and lived in Fort Garry and in Victoria. In that period, he produced hundreds of sketches and paintings – often brilliantly coloured and meticulously detailed – documenting the growth of the Canadian West during a period of great struggle and change. His eye was drawn to the narrative possibilities presented by, among other subjects, the great bison herds and the hunt, B.C.'s gold rush fever, the beginnings of prairie settlement, and the tensions among whites, aboriginals, and nonwhite immigrants. Like his elder brother naturalist Henry Youle Hind's scientific expeditions in 1857 and 1858, William Hind's mid-nineteenth-century paintings did much to promote an awareness of the potential of Canada's vast northwest.

Now, for the first time, ninety-two of Hind's oil and watercolour paintings from collections across Canada, as well as his sketchbook from his initial 1862 cross-Canada trek, have been gathered together in one place. Or, consecutively, places. The Winnipeg Art Gallery, which mounted *Hindsight – William Hind in the Canadian West*, has the exhibit until August 19. It is then scheduled to travel to the Art Gallery of Windsor (October 5–December 8) and to Montreal's McCord Museum (April 3–June 29, 2003).

Mention, too, might be made of the splendid 224-page exhibit catalogue. It comes with a CD-ROM, which presents the contents of Hind's 1862 sketchbook simply and elegantly, allowing viewers to leaf through either chronologically, geographically, or by subject.

Website of the month

If the Boer War (or South African War), which ended a century ago, is your cup of Rooibos tea, and you're looking for a one-stop Boer War website, you could do worse than go to <www.goldiproductions.com> and click on the icon that says Canadian Boer War Museum. The website is "phenomenally lush" and "truly trailblazing." It is "the most extensive internet museum in the world, featuring a glorious array of pictures and memorabilia." So say the producers of the website. Built to accompany a History Television broadcast of Goldi Productions' four-hour *The Great Anglo-Boer War: The Canadian Experience*, the website is truly extensive. Why, it's almost … *phenomenally lush*. It's hard to imagine any picture, poster, painting, relic, song, monument, etc. related to the 1899–1902 conflict that has *not* been included amid the myriad web pages. There's even two whole subsections devoted to bugles of the Boer War. And then, of course, there's the text, as in "lots of." Need further incentive? If you can identify all forty-six items in the memorabilia quiz, you will win a 20 percent reduction on the video copies of *The Great Anglo-Boer War*. Best of luck.

Television Turns Fifty

"Someone has said that the topics most talked about today are the atom bomb and television – the difference between the two being that we know how to use the bomb." That was written in 1950, just two years before the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation launched television in Montreal and Toronto. Now, fifty years later, we know only too well how television was (mis)used.

Television was a much anticipated innovation. During the war years, both journalists and advertisers spoke of the arrival of television as an example of the good things in store for Canadians once peace returned. In the United States, soon after 1945, corporate enterprise invested millions to bring television into more and more American homes: four distinct networks operated there by the end of the decade. The Canadian state was understandably more restrained, although the Liberal government of Louis St. Laurent was increasingly under pressure from the press and the public to do something fast. In March 1949 the government authorized the CBC to mount French and English services. It also established a royal commission, later referred to as the Massey Commission after its famous chair Vincent Massey, to investigate, among other matters, the shape of the television to come.

These events set off a debate in Canada about who should control the new service, what should be shown on TV, and what effect viewing might have upon the home and society. Broadly speaking, the debate expressed the opposition between two brands of culture, one Low and the other High. Low culture meant popular culture: baseball, boxing, Hollywood movies, radio soap operas, comedy, incessant advertising, news-as-entertainment, Frank Sinatra's songs, Mickey Spillane's novels, Betty Grable's legs, Jane Russell's bosom, and now Milton Berle's zany routines, one of the first great successes on American television. This culture of sensation and sin, of sentiment and laughter, was emphatically American in origin, and it already had legions of fans across Canada. Some of the masters of private radio, who had sought to wrest broadcasting from the hands of the CBC, planned to get richer using television to channel ever greater amounts of such entertainment to the mass audience. Few were quite as bold as Jack Kent Cooke, president of CKEY radio in Toronto. "An American is basically the same as a Canadian," he told the Massey Commission, "motivated by the same impulsion, exposed to the same influences of literature, music, the theatre, movies, and radio. In the first place, what is wrong with American material? If we are ever to have a Canadian culture, it will come as the result of full exposure to what is undoubtedly the fastest rising culture in the world today." The whole point was to give the public what it really wanted and to deliver the resulting audience, or at least its eyeballs, to an eager collection of advertisers. Adopt this vision and television would serve best the interests of "Carnival," where culture signified the vulgar pleasures of the people.

The public itself remains ambivalent: even if people as citizens worry about television and its impact, people as consumers prefer Carnival.

But its rival had the better case, or so it seemed, because of the import of Canadian nationalism and the attitudes of various urban elites, well-represented in the deliberations of the Massey Commission. High culture meant the plays of Shakespeare or Molière, the music of Chopin, ballet, opera, documentary films, hard news, fine art, and good literature. The home of this culture lay in Europe. Its champions hoped to civilize Canada; indeed Massey himself wanted to create a little replica of England in the New World, and that required blocking and countering the cultural influence of the United States. Canada already had some protection against the rush of the Low. There was in place a long-standing system of prevention that operated through movie censorship, customs officials, and obscenity laws. The CBC had been set up in part to ensure a place for quality and for Canada on the airwaves. Giving the people what they wanted, or thought they wanted, meant in practice allowing the advertisers to determine and disfigure programming, the bane of American radio and television. So the *Massey Report* (1951)

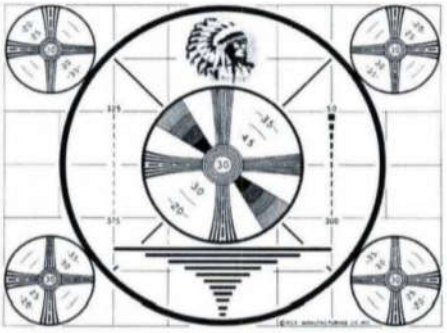
Opinions expressed in Explorations are the author's own, and do not necessarily reflect those of the *Beaver*.

extolled the English way of doing television because the British Broadcasting Corporation recognized the importance of education as well as its "moral and cultural responsibilities." These priorities had justified an "extremely varied" kind of television programming, "designed not only to entertain but to instruct, whether through drama, opera, ballet and music, or through lectures and commentaries." The best way to "enrich the mind and refine the taste" of the populace, to employ the language of the report, was to ensure the emergence of a public television service that was firmly modelled on the practice of the BBC.

Here then was the new "church" to police, and hopefully to counter, the spread of Carnival, which was any stimulus that might excite the base instincts – the overly sentimental, the materialistic, the taste for sex, violence, or gore. The CBC 's masters had soon begun to implement a vision of television that fitted the Massey agenda. During the 1950s, the CBC used public stations and private affiliates across the country – no other network was allowed – to serve the anglophone and francophone publics. By 1960 roughly 94 percent of Canadian homes were within the range of its television service, an extraordinary achievement. Although the CBC did carry American imports and offered some light entertainment – both required to generate ad revenues – it poured money into the production of classical drama, opera, ballet, and theatre, tasteful children's programming, and excellent news and public affairs shows. The CBC sought to satisfy what it imagined was an audience composed of large minorities, sophisticates as well as sports fans, city dwellers and country folk, women and men and teens.

The trouble was that this approach ran against the logic of mass communication, which favoured programming – increasingly sports and drama – that pleased the taste of the millions. Before long there was a rising clamour against all this "culchah" and a demand for more choice. Where viewers could find choice, in Toronto or Vancouver for example, most preferred the American product to the Canadian, the Low over the High. Another inquiry, the Fowler Commission in the late 1950s, recommended the end of the CBC monopoly, which opened the floodgates to a much more popular brand of television. During the 1960s, private, independent television, notably the new CTV network in English Canada and "Le 10" in Montreal (CFTM-TV), successfully challenged the CBC's hegemony by broadcasting prime-time drama, made-in-America (but dubbed in Quebec), along with some forgettable made-in-Canada quiz shows, and a lot of sports. Audiences flocked to this kind of programming, and advertisers rewarded the larger independent stations with superprofits.

The story of Canadian television



since 1970 has been more of the same; that is, the predominance of Carnival, of the private over the public service, of American over Canadian content. Three new private networks – Télé-Diffuseurs Associés (TVA, Quebec, 1971), Global (Ontario, 1972), and Télévision Quatre Saisons (TQS, Quebec, 1987) – as well as a variety of independent stations, expanded the television services available free to viewers. The broadcast governor, the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), licensed additional competition: cable companies in the 1970s, enabling viewers to pick up American signals more easily; pay-television services in the early 1980s that brought recent movies into the home; and a host of specialty channels in the 1990s, from news to comedy to nature – all of which massively increased the variety of services available to viewers willing to pay extra. By 1996, for example, roughly 60 percent of the television programs Canadians watched were foreign, more in English (70 percent) but less in French Canada (30 percent).

This reign of the carnivalesque did not go unchallenged, of course. That dethroned pattern of times past – the desire for quality and morality – now persisted as a residual form that offered a foundation for a persistent criticism of the dominant culture. Many people, even if they were addicts, felt television viewing was a time waster; indeed, that reading a book was much better for the mind and the morals. The television violence issue was briefly revitalized in 1992 when thirteen-year-old Virginie Larivière, whose younger sister had been raped and murdered, captured the news media's eye by presenting to then prime minister Brian Mulroney a petition with 1.3 million signatures to ban the display of gratuitous violence. The CRTC and the television industry both moved to address the issue, and one kids' program, *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers* (featuring kickboxing and the like), was dropped by TVA and the specialty channel YTV (in 1994), even though the original was easily available on American television. Government commissions continued to extol the virtues of Canadian programming, and there were some grand successes, such as *Canada: A People's History*. But neither government nor the CBC has been able to break the ordinary preference for the American product.

So the tendency of the times has been downwards. Producers have steadily expanded the realm of the permissible to generate the sensations that could excite jaded audiences. There is little reason to expect that things will change in the near future, though the appeal of the Internet may eventually undermine the television industry. Above all, the public itself remains ambivalent: even if people as citizens worry about television and its impact, people as consumers prefer Carnival. The vision of Jack Kent Cooke has proved much more prophetic than that of Vincent Massey.

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Fortitude in Distress: THE NORTH WEST

By 1812, North America's rivalrous fur-trade companies were at each other's throats. Then the U.S. declared war on Great Britain and struck at Canada. For one fur-trade company, it was the beginning of the end.

Looking back through a haze of nostalgia, twenty-first century aficionados of the North American fur trade often miss the difficulties and dangers associated with the continent's biggest presettlement business. Moreover, few remember that during the War of 1812, Montreal's North West Company played a significant role in the defence of "the Canadas." The company motto, Fortitude in Distress, was perhaps at no time more appropriate than during the War of 1812, for the NWC readily participated on the side of Britain and ultimately paid a substantial price for its involvement.

As the second decade of the nineteenth century began, the fur trade had

A View of the Post of St. Joseph at the Head of Lake Huron (The Last Garrison in British America) taken July 12, 1804 by E. Walsh.

Fort St. Joseph was built by the British in 1796 on St. Joseph Island at the eastern entrance of the channel linking Lakes Huron and Superior. In July 1812, at the beginning of the War of 1812, the British captured the American post at Fort Michilimackinac by launching a surprise attack from Fort St. Joseph.

Right: *North West Canoe on Lake Ontario, Ontario, 1840* by Millicent Mary Chaplin (1790–1858).

by Norma Hall and Barbara Huck

Company and the War of 1812

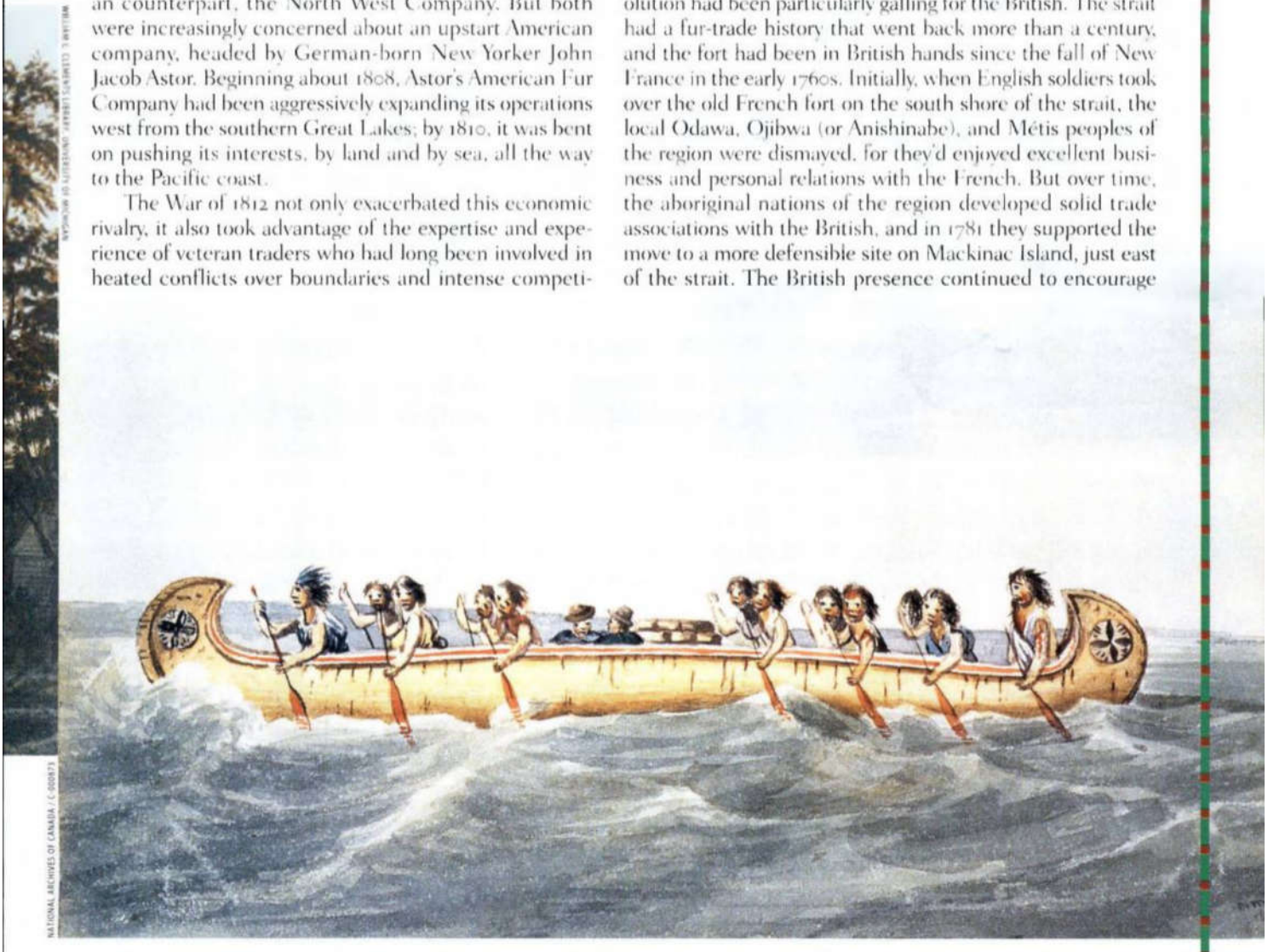
reached a level of commercial rivalry that itself approached a state of war. The War of 1812, fought between the United States and Britain over westward expansion in North America and the rights of neutral ships on the seas, was not directly related to this fur-trade turmoil. However, the international conflict certainly augmented an often violent struggle to gain control over fur-bearing territories that had been waged for more than a century.

In 1812, the main adversaries in the fur wars were the London-based Hudson's Bay Company and its Canadian counterpart, the North West Company. But both were increasingly concerned about an upstart American company, headed by German-born New Yorker John Jacob Astor. Beginning about 1808, Astor's American Fur Company had been aggressively expanding its operations west from the southern Great Lakes; by 1810, it was bent on pushing its interests, by land and by sea, all the way to the Pacific coast.

The War of 1812 not only exacerbated this economic rivalry, it also took advantage of the expertise and experience of veteran traders who had long been involved in heated conflicts over boundaries and intense competition for the loyalties of native North American suppliers. And there were some possible benefits for Canadian fur traders from war with the Americans.

Looking south, the Nor'Westers were particularly interested in two American posts—Detroit, on the western end of Lake Erie, and Fort Michilimackinac just east of the Straits of Mackinac, the pivotal waterway between Lake Huron and Lake Michigan. Each post controlled access to vast fur-bearing territories beyond.

The loss of Michilimackinac following the American Revolution had been particularly galling for the British. The strait had a fur-trade history that went back more than a century, and the fort had been in British hands since the fall of New France in the early 1760s. Initially, when English soldiers took over the old French fort on the south shore of the strait, the local Odawa, Ojibwa (or Anishinabe), and Métis peoples of the region were dismayed, for they'd enjoyed excellent business and personal relations with the French. But over time, the aboriginal nations of the region developed solid trade associations with the British, and in 1781 they supported the move to a more defensible site on Mackinac Island, just east of the strait. The British presence continued to encourage



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Canadian traders, and by the mid-1780s, the North West Company dominated the trade at Michilimackinac.

These fur-trade relationships continued even after the American Revolution, despite treaties in 1783 and 1794 that officially turned over control of the straits to the Americans. Though native North Americans had sometimes found the British to be rigid and obtuse, they were nevertheless preferable to the American rebels, who were bent on clearing and settling the land. The aboriginal nations were therefore appalled when the English soldiers were told to vacate the fort on Mackinac Island in 1783; in concert with Canadian traders, they put pressure on Britain to remain for another thirteen years. During this period, as the unfinished fort on the cliff overlooking the south shore of Mackinac Island slowly deteriorated, the British Indian Department solidified its alliances with many native peoples in the region. When finally in 1796 the soldiers withdrew to establish a new fortification on St. Joseph Island on the Canadian side of the border, the native alliances held.

But Montreal traders continued to dominate the fur trade in the village that had grown up below Fort Michilimackinac (or Fort Mackinac, as it's known today). When John Jacob Astor wanted to establish a foothold on Mackinac Island, he agreed in 1811 to a cooperative arrangement with the NWC, in which his interest became known as the South West Company (SWC). He did not concede the independence of the American trade entirely, however, and persisted in mounting competitive expeditions to the Pacific Coast.

This, then, was the situation in the Upper Great Lakes when in 1812, at the height of the Napoleonic conflict in Europe, the United States declared war on Britain in North America. Though substantially outnumbered by the Americans, the British did have a number of advantages: an able and prescient administrator in Major-General Isaac Brock, alliances with many native tribes, and the valuable skills of the Canadian fur traders. The traders were accustomed to discipline, unfazed by hardship, wily, resourceful, and able to travel swiftly over vast stretches of unmarked territory. In addition, the mainly French-Canadian, Scottish, and Métis employees of the North West Company were also ready to commit acts of violence in support of a cause. To a man, they could see that the war was an event of no small consequence in terms of the trade. And though the war effort never completely superseded business considerations, they agreed to aid the British as they could.

In fact, the NWC had anticipated war well before it was declared, for they had been forewarned by their native and Métis allies. As early as 1809, the Americans had made efforts to allay native antipathy at a meeting with many First Nations leaders at Fort Michilimackinac. Though the American governor general made a persuasive speech and gave them many gifts, the native leaders bluntly told him they had pledged allegiance to Britain at Fort St. Joseph. This news immediately prompted a threatening response. "Ignore the post at St. Joseph," they were told, "because we Americans will seize it before the end of the summer."

In the audience was the brother of John Askin Jr., regional staff officer of the British Indian Department. He quickly relayed the threat to his superiors, who in turn informed Captain Charles Roberts, in command at Fort St. Joseph, to begin to prepare for war. Fortunately, the threat was premature, for Roberts was particularly vulnerable. He had just forty-four men under his command, men he described as "so debilitated and worn down by unconquerable drunkenness that neither fear of punishment, the love of fame or the honour of their Country can animate them to extraordinary exertions."

Convinced that his only hope of victory was to strike first, he turned to local fur traders, letting them know that Britain intended to afford "every assistance and Protection Possible to Promote the Interest and Security of the North West Company." In response, Lewis Crawford of the SWC raised an expeditionary force of 140 men.

Captain Roberts also spent the succeeding months recruiting at least four hundred Anishinabe, Odawa, Menominee, Winnebago, and plains Dakota warriors, many allied to the fur traders by family ties, to join forces with him. These included fifty Dakota led by trader Robert Mascotapah Dickson; about forty Anishinabe under John Askin Jr., whose brother had raised the initial warning about the Americans and who also recruited among his mother's Odawa nation; thirty additional Odawa led by trader Amable Chevalier; forty Menominee led by Tomah and twenty-four Winnebago under Big Canoe.

Raised on nursery tales and fireside legends of "Indian massacres," the Americans panicked at the sight of so many armed natives and immediately surrendered.

The Nor'Westers also took other precautions. In 1811, William McGillivray, the chief director of the North West Company, for whom Fort William on Lake Superior had been named, established a route from York (now Toronto) north to Lake Simcoe and west to Georgian Bay, providing an alternative to the normal route west through Lake Erie. And when war was declared on June 18, 1812, the Nor'Westers were first to obtain and disseminate preemptive information.

Coincidentally, in a footnote to history, June 18 was also the day that Thomas Douglas, Earl of Selkirk and the majority shareholder in the Hudson's Bay Company, issued a pronouncement that he was about to establish a colony of soldier-settlers in Red River, in what is now Manitoba. This was, in a sense, another declaration of war, this time on the Nor'Westers' western front.

For the moment though, the Nor'Westers' main concern was the Americans, and the company's partners were ready to participate in military action. From a business perspective, they thoroughly agreed with Brock, who had stated in February that possession of both Detroit and Michilimackinac was pivotal, for without them "not only Amherstburg but most probably the whole country, must be evacuated as far as Kingston." They were therefore prepared to launch their attack even before the Americans at Michilimackinac had word that war had been declared. This element of surprise was in large part responsible for the victory of Captain Roberts and his

force of 400 aboriginal warriors and about 180 fur traders in mid-July.

The motley army, which included the NWC schooner *Caledonia*, ten bateaux, and a huge complement of canoes, set out from Fort St. Joseph on the morning of July 16. Though tactically perfect, it was a less-than-ideal day for travelling for Captain Roberts, who was suffering from "a great debility of the stomach and the bowels." He was understandably grateful for the "almost unparalleled exertions of the Canadians who manned the boats."

The force landed, unnoticed, on the north shore of Mackinac Island the following day. It quickly scaled the Turtle's Back, the hill that rises above Michilimackinac, and took the fort without "one drop either of Man's or Animal's blood [being] Spilt."

Being taken completely unaware – the small complement of less than sixty American soldiers still had no idea that war had been declared – was a large part of the easy victory, but equally important was the terror that so many native warriors evinced among them. Raised on nursery tales and fireside legends of "Indian massacres," the Americans panicked at the sight of so many armed natives and immediately surrendered. Ironically, perhaps, the British and their aboriginal allies both felt it was the Americans who had a superior reputation for brutal savagery.

The victory had significant repercussions. The NWC supply lines were secured, its interests at Michilimackinac were protected, and its position was greatly enhanced. Even Lord Selkirk felt compelled to laud the efforts of his rivals. Their "contribution to the capture," he wrote, "was an event certainly of as high importance as any that occurred during the ... war."

Further, not only had the NWC's assistance been prompt and concerted – even the "presents" necessary to formalize the First Nations' alliances were North West Company property – it was also voluntary. The declaration of martial law in Lower Canada, which was accompanied by a general embargo on goods and a compulsory oath of allegiance, was not passed by the legislative assembly until August 3, two weeks after Michilimackinac was taken.

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There were other advantageous consequences for the NorWesters. Astor's warehouses were now in Canadian territory, obliging him to rely on the NWC to circumvent border restrictions and embargoes, and the North West Company's ability to influence Canadian authorities was solidly reinforced. The victory also meant that the Canadians could rely on increased support from their aboriginal allies and continued neutrality from potentially hostile First Nations. Finally, they controlled crucial lines of communication between east and west.

To augment their position, Detroit was targeted next and taken on August 16. Fur trader Dickson – a Scot with flaming hair who had married into the Yanktonai Nakota – participated with his Dakota warriors, but the victory was mainly due to the native force under Shawnee war chief Tecumseh, who had long worked at creating aboriginal resistance to American territorial ambitions. To a degree, this victory, too, could again be attributed to American xenophobia, for it prevented the Americans from mounting a competent defence despite superior numbers and munitions.

Following these successes, William McGillivray was appointed lieutenant-colonel in command of the Canadian Volunteers, a corps of three regiments, each with between eight hundred and one thousand men. Despite this honour and its responsibilities, McGilliv-

BEAVER COLLECTION

Among the contenders for the rich North American fur trade was German-born John Jacob Astor (1763–1848), above left, who established the American Fur Company in 1808 and began aggressively expanding its operations west from the southern Great Lakes. Seeking to establish a foothold on Mackinac Island, he agreed in 1811 to a cooperative arrangement with the NWC. He didn't entirely concede the independence of the American trade, however, and continued to mount competitive expeditions to the Pacific coast. Though he suffered setbacks during the War of 1812, he revived his business at the end of hostilities and became America's first millionaire.

William McGillivray (1764–1825), above right, was chief director of the North West Company after 1804. During the War of 1812, he commanded a company of voyageurs, assisting Isaac Brock at the capture of Detroit. In recognition of his services, he was appointed lieutenant colonel in command of the Canadian Volunteers. In 1814, he was named to the legislative council of Lower Canada. Between 1814 and 1816 he directed the North West Company's opposition to the Red River Settlement and was captured when Lord Selkirk seized Fort William (named for McGillivray) in 1816 in retaliation for the destruction of the settlement. McGillivray emerged unscathed from the protracted legal proceedings that followed. After the 1821 union between the Hudson's Bay and North West companies, he was made a member of the joint board formed to manage the fur trade. He died in London, England.

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Shawnee war chief Tecumseh (above, left) allied his forces with those of the British and Canadians during the war of 1812 and was instrumental in the victory over the Americans at Detroit in August 1812. He died in battle fourteen months later.

Thomas Douglas (above, right), Earl of Selkirk and the majority shareholder in the Hudson's Bay Company, established a colony of soldier-settlers in Red River, in what is now Manitoba.

Mackinac Island (below), drawn from nearby Round Island, circa 1812. This was the last of three locations in the Straits of Mackinac for the military post known as Fort Michilimackinac. (The fort here today is known as Fort Mackinac.) In 1634, French explorers established a fort on the north shore of the straits at St. Ignace. About 1715, a new fort was erected on the south shore, at present-day Mackinaw City, Michigan, and held until the British troops arrived in 1761, during the Seven Years' War. During the American Revolution, the post was moved to nearby Mackinac Island, then in 1796 ceded to the U.S. In the War of 1812, British forces from Fort St. Joseph captured Fort Mackinac without firing a shot by taking advantage of the hill above the fort. The post was returned to the U.S. in 1815.

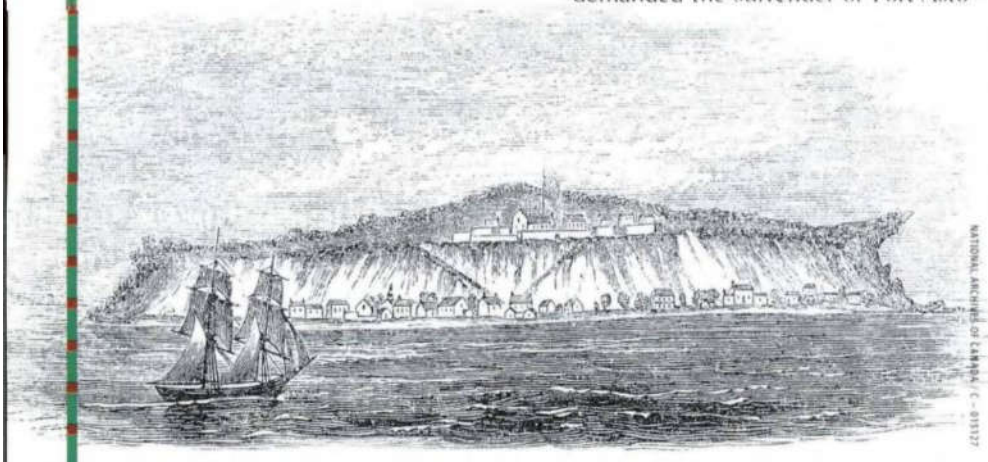
ray's main concern continued to be the fur business. The *Minutes of Deliberations and Transactions* for 1812 indicate that the war was simply viewed as an obstacle to be surmounted by judicious planning. Nor had the NWC forgotten the Pacific challenge posed by Astor. His men had arrived first at the mouth of the Columbia River by sea in April 1811 and begun building a post, which they called Astoria. Nor'Wester David Thompson, travelling by an arduous route over the Rockies, got there in mid-July and had to satisfy himself with establishing small houses inland. To augment their presence in the Pacific region, the Nor'Westers sent two partners from England by ship and other parties overland. Though the Northwest Coast was officially undesignated territory, they carried with them letters of marque that demanded the surrender of Fort Astoria. They also had a contingency plan to guard against a collapse of the trade should the company's supply lines to the distant posts be severed. It was, in fact, just such a circumstance in 1813 that convinced the Americans to sell Fort Astoria and several outposts to the Canadians.

To ensure that such a thing did not happen at their own posts, the NWC partners passed the following directive at their 1812 meeting: "All the Departments ... [should keep one] fourth of the whole Outfit in reserve to [supply posts] in the Interior should circumstances prevent a supply from being sent by any way or any means."

Further bowing to the demands of war, the partners instructed that a unit of as many men "as could be spared ... set out in the *Invincible* with a supply of arms ammunition & Provisions for St. Maries – then to act as circumstances may require."

Despite all these forward-looking measures, a year later the North West Company was facing mounting debts and large losses. Their plans had not been enough to negate the impact of the war. Two company ships, the *Caledonia* and the *Detroit*, both loaded with cargo, had been captured by the Americans, and returns were down in all departments. The Red River Department was cited as an example. There, the paucity of trade goods that had reached the interior had occasioned "contempt in the Eyes of the natives."

Nor did the coming year promise to be any better. "On account of the war," the partners felt it was unlikely that supplies sent from Montreal would arrive at many posts in the interior. Faced with looming disaster, they ordered substantial staff cuts, eliminating 150 engagés, clerks, interpreters, and canoe makers. All departments were persuaded to reserve a quarter of all supplies to protect themselves from "Misfortune" should they be faced with Americans "over-running Canada." Posts were instructed to preserve "such a quantity of Tobacco & High Wines as would afford a moderate supply for the Country without any aid from Canada." And out on the Columbia, though the company was still interested in



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securing an advantageous position on the Pacific, employees were told to "curtail as much as possible every unnecessary Expense in order to meet the present Scale of the Trade."

Leading by example, the partners even censured the practice, enjoyed by most of them, of travelling speedily with lightly loaded canoes.

Their worries were justified. Having begun the war with just one ship and a dilapidated schooner, General Brock had inventoried all available lake-going transport and acquired a number for service in the Provincial Marine. Of NWC watercraft, even canoes were subject to requisition. The company's larger vessels, ostensibly on military duty as troopships and supply transports, were only lightly armed and continued to ferry fur-trade cargoes to and from company depots. Then on September 10, 1813, both the army and the company were dealt a major blow when the Americans captured the entire British naval force and brought the vessels to Put-in-Bay on Lake Erie. Suddenly, a vital transportation route was lost, and lines of communication were disrupted.

The Americans were jubilant. The victory, wrote a Baltimore news correspondent, presaged the end of both the North West Company and the demise of many of their native allies:

> *All the places of deposit for Indian supplies will be broken up, and the savages employed in the* business *of the British during the summer and cut off at this critical season from their accustomed resources must perish by the thousands for want of food and clothing. The trade of the North-West Company, a mighty mercantile establishment of vital importance to Canada and of great consideration to the Mother Country, is done.*

He also predicted both Michilimackinac and Fort St. Joseph would fall into American hands. The prediction was a little premature, but major challenges lay ahead for the Nor'Westers. To provision Michilimackinac and maintain contact with the West, they turned to the northern route mapped out two years before by William McGillivray, but it was arduous and ran partly over dry land. The result was severe supply shortages.

Though goods arrived from England by ship by the following February, the problems getting them inland seemed almost insurmountable. Desperate, the NWC petitioned the British government for access through Hudson Bay, the route the HBC used. Permission was eventually granted for the voyage in, but the two companies could not agree on terms to bring the goods out of the interior. In the Columbia District, events proceeded more smoothly. Just the threat of a British warship was enough to convince the Astorians to sell off the fort and its contents in December 1813.

Still, the Nor'Westers continued to assist with the war effort. Robert Dickson, "with about Six hundred Warriors and One hundred White People of every description," joined McGillivray's voyageurs from Michilimackinac under retired trader William McKay to take Prairie du Chien and to secure points along the Mississippi in Wisconsin.

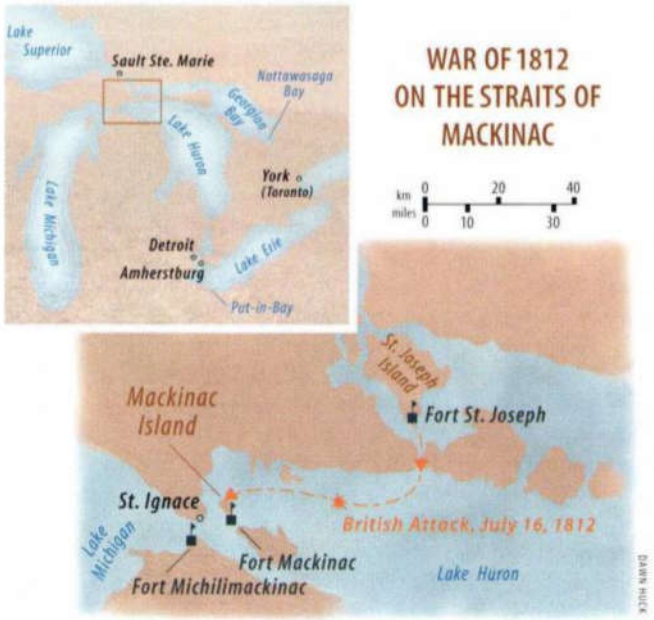
On hearing of this conquest, the NWC was optimistic that favourable terms could be negotiated with the U.S., enabling the company to trade in the area. But that optimism would prove to be misplaced.

To the north in Red River, the supply problems prompted a major crisis as opposition to Lord Selkirk's settlement hardened to outrage. Claiming a right to regulate bison hunting and pemmican production in Rupert's Land, the HBC seized pemmican belonging to the Nor'Westers and stored it at Brandon House, a Hudson's Bay Company post. The NWC decried the move as a "Violent and illegal" pretence.

The act was seen as akin to war and the partners resolved that in future all employees would "defend the Property at all Hazards," and thereby "render it a dangerous service to any man who may presume to plunder them." The resolution was sealed with a "feast of 13 pts of liquor and Provisions" for each man.

On the Great Lakes, the Americans spent the summer of 1814 harassing the Nor'Westers. In early July, they left Detroit with two ships and three schooners carrying more than five hundred sailors and seven hundred soldiers. Stymied by fog and a lack of familiarity with the local geography, the Americans failed in an attempt to cut off the NWC supply route at the Georgian Bay depot and set sail for Michilimackinac. En route, they razed the deserted fortifications on St. Joseph Island, destroyed the NWC's fine new schooner *Perseverance*, seized the *Mink*, and pillaged the company property in Sault Ste. Marie. But the attack on Michilimackinac on August 4 failed. Lieutenant-Colonel Robert McDouall's garrison of fewer than two hundred easily repulsed the invaders, aided by their familiarity with the island's topography and dense natural cover, as well as their "gallant" native allies.

Determined to do more damage, the American schooners set off to intercept the *Nancy*, due to arrive with provisions, but she was too fleet for them. Alerted by a canoe-borne messenger, she fled east and hid in the mouth



of the Nottawasaga River at the south end of Georgian Bay. Unfortunately, the Americans found her there and burned her to the waterline. Content at last, the Americans departed, leaving the *Scorpion* and the *Tigress* to maintain the blockade. The tale was not quite complete, however. Using bateaux and canoes in a night attack, Dickson and some two hundred warriors, along with some fifty sailors from Michilimackinac, overran the two American schooners.

It was the last act of the war, but not the last battle for the NWC. The Treaty of Ghent negotiations began on August 6, and immediately Britain made it clear that it wished to return to the *status quo pro ante bellum*, the situation prior to the outbreak of hostilities. Since such an outcome would return the Canadians' territorial gains in Michigan and Wisconsin to the Americans, the NorWesters were aghast. Having poured their resources into the war on the British side, they had assumed their interests would be taken into account. When it was clear they would not, they scrambled for redress, filing claims for compensation, citing the losses suffered at Sault Ste. Marie and the marine vessels and cargoes lost during the war. In the end, however, though an amount was awarded for "zeal and services," only the *Nancy*'s war-related services were recognized.

As to boundary considerations, the British tendency to concede conquered territory had been anathema to the NWC since 1783. In March 1815, William McGillivray warned that the return of Michilimackinac would terminate the excellent relations the British had with First Nations to the south and west. He wrote:

> *The Americans, aware (from the circumstances of the late War) of the influence established by means of the Trade carried on by Canadian Merchants and their Agents resident among the Indians, will naturally use every means to prevent a recurrance* [sic] *of this influence … and experience has shewn how much the safety of Upper Canada depends upon that friendship.*

Lieutenant-Colonel McDouall at Michilimackinac also protested, noting the rights of aboriginal peoples in the region:

> *My perplexity is as great as ever, as to the order, sent me … to give up Fort McKay and the Prairie des Chiens, to the Americains* [sic], *as the ninth article of the Treaty affords the most clear & circumstantial evidence, that the great extent of Country upon the Mississippi … reverts again to the Indians, as it is expressly stipulated that they are restored to all the possessions, rights & privileges, which they enjoyed in 1811.*

He also balked at the idea of relocating and repeated McGillivray's caution about losing the carefully cultivated friendship and support of the region's First Nations. By June 24, however, he had resigned himself to ceding Michilimackinac and Prairie du Chien to the Americans.

Astor had more success with lobbying the U.S. government about Fort Astoria. Swayed by the man who was soon to become the first American millionaire, the U.S. insisted on its return. Simon McGillivray, William's brother, business associate, and a long-time agitator on behalf of the NWC, countered that not only had the fort been legitimately purchased from the Americans, but British sovereignty extended over the whole Pacific slope by right of exploration and occupation. It was an argument that would take thirty years to resolve.

Attempting to take advantage of the NorWesters' weakened state, Lord Selkirk also tried to press his advantage at Red River. To increase competition, he instituted a system of profit-sharing among HBC officers and in the spring of 1816, his men destroyed the NWC's Fort Gibraltar at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers.

The response, in June of that year, was the Seven Oaks Incident, in which a party of Métis and NorWesters gathered to escort a shipment of pemmican from the west. The party was intercepted by twenty-five HBC colonists and the governor, Robert Semple. The HBC men were quickly surrounded and twenty-one of them, including Semple, were killed. Selkirk responded by bringing soldiers from Montreal. En route they seized Fort William, site of the NWC's annual rendezvous on Lake Superior. This time the NorWesters did get some assistance from the government, for Selkirk was ultimately required to pay damages.

Overall, assessing the contribution of the North West Company to the War of 1812 must be done within limits. The company clearly viewed the war as only one of a series of challenges to the advancement of its cause—a profitable trade—and pursued its commercial interests almost without pause. Yet this strategy was ultimately enormously costly and increased the NWC's vulnerability in a ruthlessly competitive business. Further, it's clear that though the company's gains south of the Great Lakes bolstered Britain's eventual negotiating position, these territories were ultimately deemed not worth preserving. In short, what were seen as the business assets of the fur traders were willingly surrendered in favour of peace.

The company's war losses were followed by others. The fur trade amalgamation with the HBC in 1821 sacrificed the company's name; the Pacific holdings were lost to the Americans under the Oregon Treaty; and the reputation of the North West Company as a defender of the Canadas was lost as the War of 1812 was moulded into a mythology deemed more respectable for an emerging democratic nation. ⊠

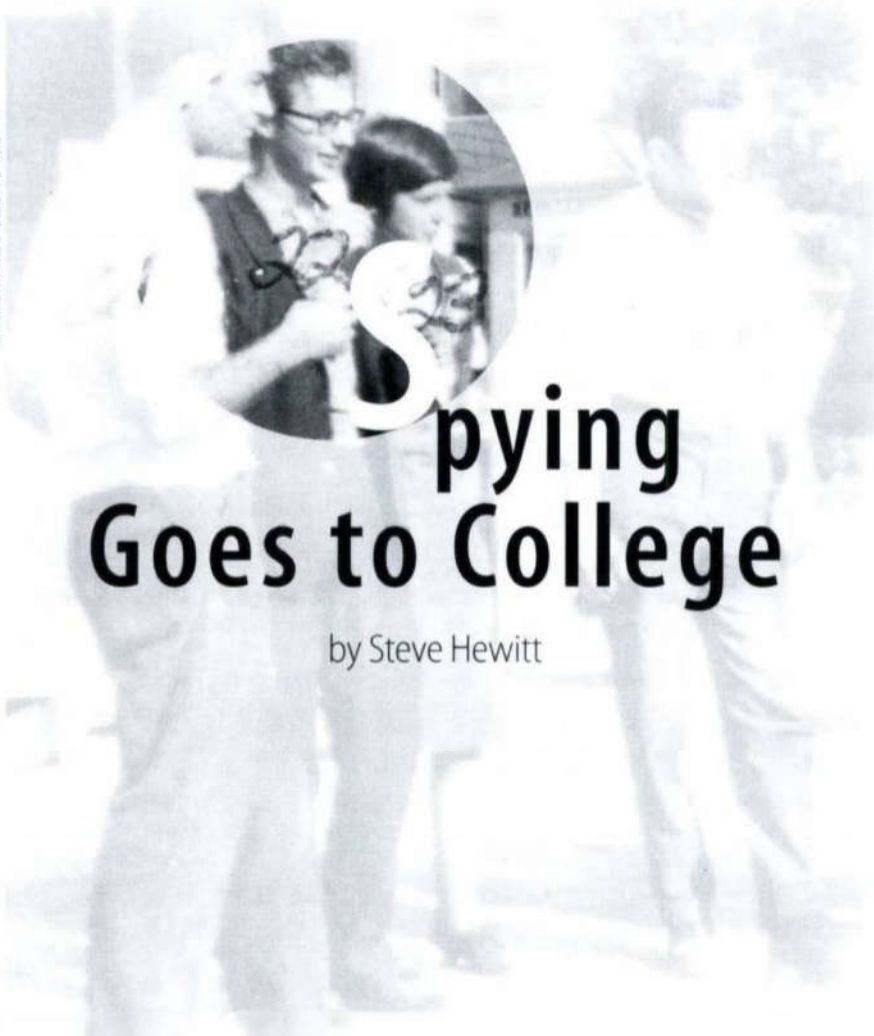
Norma Hall is a masters student studying history at the University of Manitoba. Barbara Huck is the author of *Exploring the Fur Trade Routes of North America*.

et cetera

Both Fort Michilimackinac, reconstructed on the site of the original in Mackinaw City, Michigan, and Fort Mackinac, on nearby Mackinac Island, feature interactive displays and military reenactments, and are open from May to mid-October. On St. Joseph Island, ninety kilometres south of Sault Ste. Marie, are the ruins of Fort St. Joseph with an interpretive centre, open from late May to early October.

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN ARCHIVES / A-6401

For the RCMP after the war, communists were the subversives. But when dissent flowered in the 1960s, the Mounties were flummoxed.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA / C146273

Spying Goes to College

by Steve Hewitt

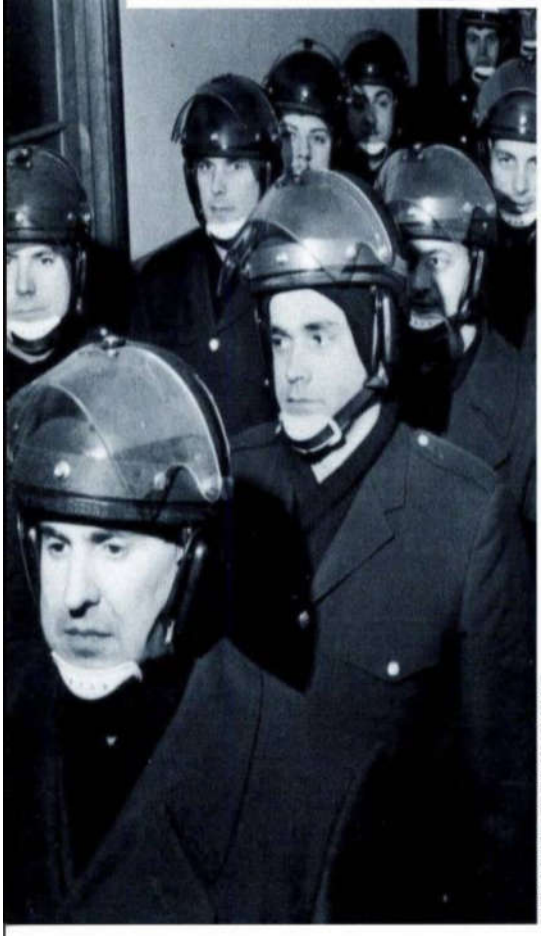
It was a Thanksgiving full of youthful enthusiasm. Hundreds of university students from across Ontario and Quebec spent the October 1961 holiday weekend campaigning instead of resting. All were members of the Combined Universities Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, or CUCND for short, an organization that had its birth in the late 1950s; they had gathered on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, literally under the shadows of the Canadian government whose policy they sought to change. Among those lugging placards on the sunny fall day was a busload of students from Université Laval in Quebec City. One of the Laval group wore a Brownie camera around his neck, employing it frequently to capture images of several of the demonstrators, some of whom he knew and some of whom he didn't. Unlike with most shutterbugs, the final destination for his pictures was not an album of personal memories or a dresser drawer. He had not taken the photos for himself but for his secret employer, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, who believed the peace movement to be a threat to Canadian security. When the bus full of students returned home, the photographer made his way to the local RCMP detachment, where he turned over the film, the names of the Laval students who had travelled to Ottawa, and CUCND pamphlets to his police "handler." Later the student informant helped the police identify many of those featured in the pictures.

In the post–September 11 era, it is important to remember that concern over threats to domestic security is nothing new. What happened on the 1961 Thanksgiving weekend represented what it was that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, specifically the

Students from Université Laval in Quebec City, members of the Combined Universities Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CUCND), en route to Ottawa in October 1961 for an antinuclear demonstration. This photograph was taken by a fellow member and police informant. The numbers were added by the police for identification purposes.

Border on this and subsequent pages: Students and faculty of the University of Saskatchewan demonstrate against the war in Vietnam in Saskatoon, early 1970s.

COURTESY THE CARLETON



MAC JUSTER / GAZETTE (MONTREAL) INC.

Cartoon (top) mocking the RCMP from *The Carleton*, Carleton University's student newspaper, January 25, 1963.

Police assemble at Loyola College, Montreal, to force evacuation of sit-in students and faculty, January 12, 1970.

counter-subversion branch of its Security Service, did during the Cold War. The 1960s are particularly instructive, because in that decade social forces arose which challenged the basis for the security work: Communist subversion, a nebulously defined notion at the best of times, represented the chief threat to Canada. Higher education, the centre of many of these social forces, was of particular interest to the Mounted Police – and it was here that the Mountie concept of a threat would expand.

What had not changed, however, was the *idea* of a threat. Security agencies cannot survive without the existence of a threat – it does not matter if the threat is real, exaggerated, or imagined – its existence is essential. The history of these Cold War security activities is especially relevant to the post–September 11 period we now live in – a world where intelligence services created in the Cold War era continue their work to ensure our security, and where real, exaggerated, and imagined threats still coexist.

Part of the inspiration for a photo-taking informant lay only a short distance and sixteen years and a few days away from Parliament Hill. In September 1945, Igor Gouzenko, a twenty-six-year-old cipher clerk in the Soviet Union's Canadian embassy, left work with top-secret documents concealed in his clothing. After some initial difficulty in finding someone to listen to his story while avoiding the Soviets searching for him, Gouzenko, with his family, were finally taken in by the Canadian government. Among his purloined booty were papers revealing the existence of a spy ring that involved not only those the government and the RCMP (because of ethnic and class prejudice) would have expected – workers and ethnic minorities – but those of the upper echelons of Canadian society: academics, scientists, and civil servants.

Gouzenko's fateful decision to defect did not create a domestic spy agency for Canada. In its modern form, the RCMP's intelligence role dated from the First World War. It reinforced the long-held view of communism as the main threat to Canadian security, and it expanded both the categories of people prone to the siren call of Red radicalism and the ranks of those whose task it was to investigate the evangelists of such an ideology.

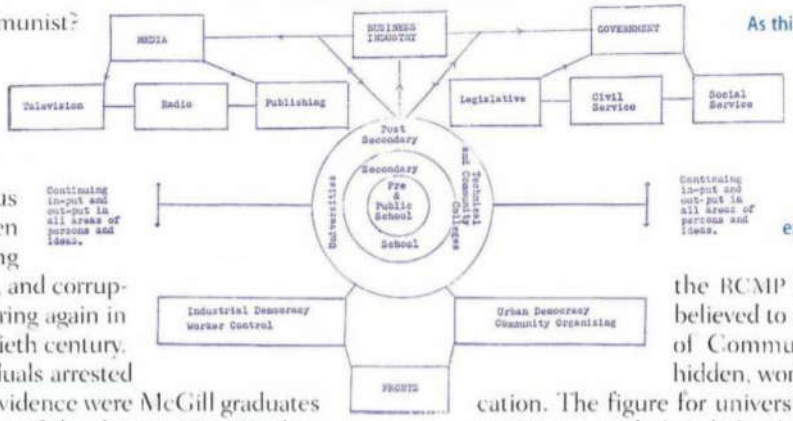
Nor did the Mounties operate in a vacuum. Instead, they acted with the encouragement of the federal government and ordinary citizens. Gouzen-

One Quebec newspaper declared: "You send your boy to McGill a Canadian democrat and he graduates an international Communist."

ko's revelations that the Soviet Union had been, with the assistance of Canadian Communists, conducting espionage against its wartime ally Canada, fuelled a general sense of betrayal and restored to prominence the animosity many had felt toward communism before the war. Moreover, with the encouragement of the federal government and many Canadians, Mounties set out to *do* something about the radical threat. No other approach was possible, since the RCMP, in a burst of Cold War dogmatism, warned in a 1949 pamphlet, "A convinced Communist is a man possessed. He is not amenable to argument or persuasion, or even coercion. Society must always be on guard against him, and each citizen must be prepared to combat his ideas wherever they crop up."

As the RCMP 's security branch grew after 1945, so did its collection of files. With the Cold War increasing in ferocity as the 1940s tensed to a close, the security game was as much about capturing and protecting minds (fighting subversion) as it was about catching spies (combating espionage). Not surprisingly, with such an atmosphere and approach, higher education seemed particularly vulnerable to attack. Here the young minds of tomorrow's elite were being moulded. What if the

CANADIAN SECURITY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE / ACCESS REQUEST 117-98-71



As this diagram from the late 1960s suggests, RCMP security considered the education system to be central to the transmission of ideas they believed to be subversive. By this time, however, subversive categories had expanded beyond communists.

craftsperson was a Communist? What if he or she was using the classroom to convert the captive audience of students to the cause of revolution or some equally nefarious belief? Socrates had been convicted of corrupting youth in ancient Greece, and corruption seemed to be occurring again in the Canada of the twentieth century. That some of the individuals arrested because of Gouzenko's evidence were McGill graduates seemed further evidence of the danger. One Quebec newspaper declared: "You send your boy to McGill a Canadian democrat and he graduates an international Communist." In the House of Commons the member for Peace River worried that so many Communists held jobs at Canadian universities where they could "undermine the faith of our young people in Canada, in true democracy, and in Christianity."

On the ground in the early years of the Cold War, Mounties investigated the claims of Communist-ridden campuses. They recruited informants, collected materials, and in plainclothes sat in to hear the occasional lecture or guest speaker. Often the end results were decidedly mixed. A policeman accompanied by a student informant attended a special lecture at Ottawa's Carleton College in 1957. The talk that followed under the title "In Defence of Rationalism" was so unintelligible that the police officer, even after a translation from his secret helper, remained in a state of bewilderment. He informed his superiors that his attendance at future lectures in the series was pointless since his informant/interpreter refused to attend any more.

In the 1950s the police also sought communism in the world of student politics. Mock parliamentary elections were a campus tradition. The RCMP followed and reported to Ottawa the results as closely as media pundits on federal election night. The governing rationale was that student election results would provide an accurate indication of Communist support on campus, since those with hidden Red proclivities might be more inclined to reveal their affiliation in the anonymity of a campus ballot box. That many students voted Communist as a joke did not escape the attention of the police. Thus headquarters dismissed as insignificant the forty-seven medical students who had voted Communist at the University of Alberta, but considered nine students in the conservative school of engineering casting their vote for the Reds worthy of further investigation.

These collective efforts had a more serious purpose: to ascertain the extent of the Communist threat, of subversion. Subversion was by definition a broad and ill-defined concept. To the Mounted Police the only proof necessary was that communism be involved, hence the search for Reds. By 1959, the RCMP had compiled what it believed to be a comprehensive list of Communists, both open and hidden, working in the field of education. The figure for universities was ninety, which put it in second place behind the 166 Communists in the employ of Canada's elementary and nursery schools, although a police officer admitted the latter group had little opportunity to inject Marxism into the classroom. What the police lacked (and some admitted to this) was any evidence that Communists were using their positions to indoctrinate their students. With the Cold War in its full fury, most Canadian Communists would have tried to keep their beliefs to themselves, especially when stories abounded of U.S. teachers and academics being fired because of their political affiliation. Still, the Mounties could not ignore their security training, which, although limited, had repeatedly emphasized the danger communism posed to Canadian society.

One controversial area where higher education, the outside world, and communism seemed to intersect was within the peace movement. In the face of tensions between the two nuclear superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, many ordinary citizens were drawn to the peace movement in an effort to curtail the "mutually assured destruction" logic that fuelled the arms race. To the Mounted Police the efforts of the peace movement (which included Communists) to influence government opinion represented a chance for the Soviet Union to drive a wedge between Canada and its main friend and ally.

The peace movement was also significant because it served as a bridge between the 1950s and the growing campus activism of the 1960s. Many who began with the CUCND migrated to the Student Union for Peace Action or other more radical associations. Clean-cut Mounties, who had numerous restrictions on their personal appearance, made disparaging (and perhaps slightly envious) remarks about the growing numbers of "dirty and unshaven" "hippie types" and "beatniks" appearing at rallies and other protests. As the sixties progressed, the level of campus discontent grew. People protested the Vietnam War; they criticized Canada's relationship with the United States and worried about the Americanization of their country. Issues related to class, race, and gender inspired marches and sit-ins. Finally, students and others demonstrated against the university itself—its lack of democracy and unresponsive-

ness to the changing world around it.

In understanding what was happening on campuses, Mounties were as bewildered as university administrators, or students' parents. Instead of attempting to understand the social context fuelling radicalism, the Mounties blamed it all on communism, a position reinforced by their training and the Cold War. If Communist involvement in student unrest could not be discovered, it was not because it did not exist but because the police had not delved deep enough to discover it. In taking this position, the RCMP differed in one significant respect from the U.S. intelligence agencies: the Central Intelligence Agency and the Federal Bureau of Investigation more quickly grasped that something new was afoot. Under way was protest and discontent inspired not by foreign agitators, as the police asserted, but by social causes: the Vietnam War, the civil rights' movement, fear of nuclear war, popular culture, demographics in the form of the Baby Boom generation, and a host of other causes.

DAY ONE
OF
THE NEW UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
A Day of Music, Speakers, Films, Discussion, Theatre, Free Food, and Balloons
* With ABBIE HOFFMAN *
And Edward Bear, Crowbar, Fluid, Kieth McKie, Simon Caine
Factory Lab Theatre Education Liberation Front And Lots more.
SEPTEMBER 25 on the UofT Campus

Eventually even the Mounted Police could not ignore the evidence emerging from higher education. The police emphasis on the Communist threat to higher education shifted toward the "New Left" and violence in 1968.* In April of that year, in an event that shocked many, students working under the banner of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) occupied the office of the president of Columbia University, taking time to puff on his cigars and sample his private liquor supply before being beaten and arrested by the police. One of the leaders of the occupation, Mark Rudd, turned up to speak at the University of British Columbia in October of the same year. Shortly after, another prominent American radical, Jerry Rubin, of the famous "Chicago Eight" who disrupted the 1968 Democratic convention, also spoke at UBC, and in the aftermath of his talk led an occupation of the university's faculty club. Among the occupying students was a police informant.

By themselves, these two events would not have held the attention of the police. But when on November 21 students at Simon Fraser University (SFU), a location that one Mountie labelled as the most "far out" university in Canada, occupied the administration building for two days, suddenly the police suspicions that had once been applied to communism now had a new home. An occupation of the computer centre at Sir George Williams University the following January and February, an event that ended with acts of vandalism, only reinforced the Mounties' conviction of a grand conspiracy: Canadian campus protests, not to mention other radical activity, were being either directed from the United States or coordinated with American activity. An informant at Sir George Williams University decried the events at his or her university as "preplanned" and part of a movement "that will be more fascist than even that of the Nazi regime in Germany during World War II." Appearing before a House of Commons committee three months after the SGWU occupation, the RCMP 's assistant commissioner warned of linkages between American and Canadian radicals. But when pressed by a committee member for evidence, William Kelly replied that his concern had been based more on a "feeling" than on "proof."

Although the old fear of subversion remained, the campus events of 1968 and 1969, particularly the trashing of the computer centre at Sir George Williams, now supplied the Mounted Police with a new justification for their domestic operations: the threat of violence. In response, under increasing pressure from the federal government to investigate campus radicalism and separatism in Quebec, the RCMP launched a new effort on campus. One component was a recruitment campaign for informants at universities, because the RCMP had had little success in "penetrating" the student protest movement and because many of its former faculty informants had retired. Whereas in an earlier time people had only been too happy to assist the police, the sixties were different. Instead, university students were more committed to embarrassing the Mounties by publicly exposing recruitment attempts or simply ridiculing the police as an institution. The Mounties had difficulty acknowledging that Canadian youth, like others of their generation, were questioning authority, institutions, and the establishment in all their forms, and the primary roots of their unrest came not from without, but within their own societies.

As part of the late 1960s reforms, the RCMP expanded its files on higher education. Headquarters in Ottawa made it clear that radicals now came in a variety of ideological hues beyond the ones traditionally coloured Red: "CP of C member, suspected Trotskyist, self-admitted Marxist, black nationalist, student agitator, anarchist, red power advocate, or an associate of communists." Whereas at the end of the 1950s, the Mounties held files on ninety nonstudents at universities, for 1969 headquarters in Ottawa held 357 files on individuals employed in education in Ontario alone.

No scrap of information remained unexamined. The list

*The New Left was a broad label applied to a diverse movement that emerged at the end of the 1950s and in the 1960s. In general, its adherents, who found inspiration in the writings of theorists like C. Wright Mills, Herbert Marcuse, and even Karl Marx, rejected orthodoxy and authoritarianism of all kinds including that of the so-called Old Left. A rejection of what amounted to Stalinism was not necessarily, however, a repudiation of Communist principles.

of materials passed on to Ottawa in 1970 included an account of the appearance at the University of Alberta by American radical (and Chicago Eight member) Abbie Hoffman, an assessment of the Canadian University Press, a mention of a conference on Marxism at the University of Waterloo, a report about a SFU history-student organization, derisive comments from a student informant about an all-female student executive at Brandon University, and descriptions of the formation of a Jewish student group at SFU and a gay organization in Vancouver. In September 1970, an undercover Mountie joining in a campus festival, "Day One of the New University of Toronto," collected pamphlets from a wide variety of groups. Unclear as to the top threat to Canada, his collection included material from a gay-rights group, the Varsity Christian Fellowship, and the Campus Crusade for Christ.

The results of the investigations concerned the highest ranks of the RCMP. "The total of the activities of a subversive nature carried out in Canada by many different organizations is very worrying and clearly represents a serious threat to the unity of the country and to the preservation of law and order," cautioned the director general of the RCMP Security Service, John Starnes, to the federal deputy minister of justice. "Moreover, all the indications are that the level of these kinds of activity across the land is likely to increase rather than to diminish in the next few years."

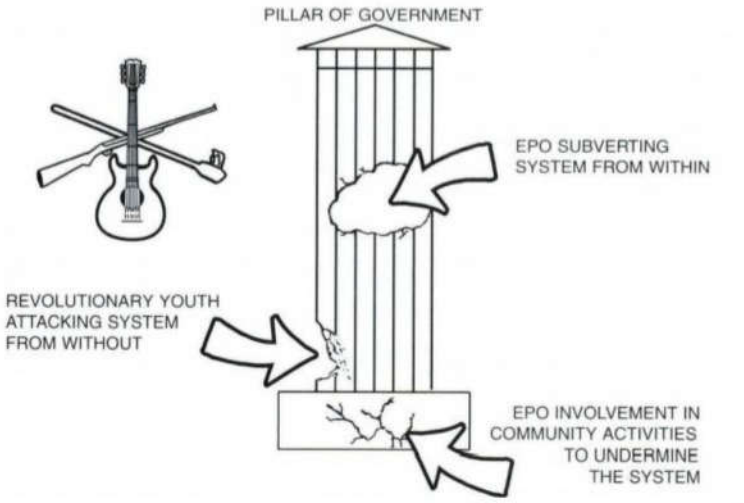
The Mounted Police reiterated this message to Pierre Trudeau, his cabinet, and senior government bureaucrats, at a special security briefing in September 1971. Reacting as well to the 1970 October Crisis, the RCMP used a special slide show to paint a dire future for domestic stability in the 1970s. In short, argued Canada's intelligence service, the new decade would render the sixties calm in comparison.

Canada's famous police force proved, in the end, more proficient at collecting information than using it as a basis for fortunetelling. The social factors of the 1960s that had fuelled campus protest dissipated in the 1970s, and the campuses quieted. Instead of universities experiencing turmoil, the RCMP Security Service did. Pressured by the federal government to act against radicalism, it launched a campaign of illegal activities, later nicknamed the "dirty tricks." Out of this came a royal commission and the eventual decision to strip the Mounties of the primacy of their security role and create a new agency, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service. Within CSIS, however, there was an element of continuity with the past. At its start most of its personnel were ex-Mounties and one of the primary justifications for its work, next to espionage, the threat of violence in the form of terrorism, had already been a growing concern in the old Security Service.

Within the continuity there is also relevance for the post–September 11 world. As in the Cold War, a real threat to domestic security exists. But, also as in the Cold War, the potential exists (and indeed has occurred in some cases) for imagined and exaggerated threats to take over, for scapegoating and infringements on civil liberties to occur, and for those who dissent to be discredited by being branded as terrorists in the same way that the label *Communist* or *Red* was applied in the Cold War.

It may indeed be a new world after September 11, but when it comes to domestic security agencies whose roots lie in the Cold War, fundamental change may be slow in coming.

Slide from a September 1971 RCMP presentation to Pierre Trudeau and senior cabinet ministers and bureaucrats about Canadian security threats. The EPO (Extra-Parliamentary Opposition) refers to former student radicals.


THE NEW LEFT
PILLAR OF GOVERNMENT
EPO SUBVERTING SYSTEM FROM WITHIN
REVOLUTIONARY YOUTH ATTACKING SYSTEM FROM WITHOUT
EPO INVOLVEMENT IN COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES TO UNDERMINE THE SYSTEM

CANADIAN SECURITY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE / ACCESS REQUEST 117-91-102

Steve Hewitt teaches history at the University of Indianapolis and is a visiting scholar at Purdue University. His book, *Spying 101: The RCMP's Secret Activities at Canadian Universities, 1917–1997*, from which this article is adapted, is scheduled for publication September 2002, by University of Toronto Press. For more information visit <www.spying101.com>; Steve can be reached at <spying_101@yahoo.ca>.

et cetera

Cold War Canada: The Making of a National Insecurity State, 1945–1957, by Reg Whitaker and Gary Marcuse. University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1994.

Children of Privilege: Student Revolt in the Sixties, by Cyril Levitt. University of Toronto Press, 1984.

Occupation, a 1970 documentary film by Bill Reid about students occupying political science department offices at McGill University, is available through the National Film Board at <www.nfb.ca>.

by Harry Chapman

The year 1936 was eventful for news hounds: The King was having an affair with an American divorcée and would abdicate the throne. Civil war had broken out in Spain. German troops violated the Treaty of Versailles and occupied the Rhineland. Bruno Hauptmann was executed for kidnapping and killing the Lindbergh baby. And then there was the mining disaster in Nova Scotia that became

The Rescue Heard 'Round the World

Sixty-six years ago the village of Moose River, Nova Scotia, became the centre of world attention as millions of people across North America and parts of Europe waited anxiously by their radios for live, up-to-the-minute news reports on a dramatic rescue operation to save three men trapped forty-three metres below the surface of the earth in an old gold mine.

In a ten-day race against time and death, miners and draegermen slowly clawed their way through a tangle of broken timbers and fallen rocks to reach the entombed men before rising mine water snuffed out their lives.

Though Nova Scotia had known worse mining accidents with greater loss of life, the rescue would become a major media event (due in part to the Toronto origins of the three victims) that would transform radio from a largely entertainment medium to a fast, reliable news source and in the process change journalism in North America forever.

The man who would become the vehicle for this was J. Frank Willis, a Halifax native, working for the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission, the forerunner of the CBC.

The Moose River mine saga began on Easter Sunday evening, April 12. Two of the mine's shareholders, Dr. David E. Robertson, the fifty-nine-year-old chief of staff at Toronto's Sick Children's Hospital, and Herman Russell Magill, a thirty-year-old

J. Frank Willis was the Halifax correspondent for the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission, forerunner of the CBC, when the Moose River gold mine caved and trapped three men inside. Willis, shown here interviewing a rescue worker at Moose River in 1936, began his radio career as a freelance actor-announcer for New York's WABC while studying art on a scholarship from King's College School in Halifax. He returned to Halifax in 1929 to open an art studio and became a professional actor with a repertory theatre and a producer of radio plays. From 1939 to his death in 1969, he was a mainstay of CBC Toronto where he produced radio documentaries and hosted several television public affairs programs.

COURTESY CBC

Toronto lawyer, went into the mine around nine o'clock with the company's forty-two-year-old timekeeper and bookkeeper, Charles Alfred Scadding, for an inspection tour pending a possible sale of the mine to New York interests.

Two hours later, while the three were waiting at the forty-three-metre level for the hoist to return them to the surface, the mine's roof came crashing down, trapping them in a small chamber without heat, light, food, or water.

Prior to the cave-in, few people had heard of Moose River, a small village one hundred kilometres east of Halifax. Gold mining had been a periodic venture there for more than a half-century until the Moose River Syndicate was created with Robertson and Magill as principal shareholders. Magill and Scadding had moved to Moose River in January to supervise the dewatering of the mine. Robertson arrived only the day before to inspect the work carried out to date.

When the mine collapsed, no one seriously believed the trapped men were still alive. Those who rushed to the pithead to help with the rescue thought they were going down the shaft to retrieve bodies. But the men below lit a fire with wood from empty dynamite boxes; the smoke, drifting up through cracks in the earth, signalled that they were still alive. By blowing on the embers, they kept the fire going for the next eighteen hours.

When news of the accident reached Halifax, reporters from the Halifax papers, Canadian Press, and radio station CHNS rushed to the scene. The next day, planeloads of Toronto reporters flooded into Nova Scotia, hotly pursued by other reporters from papers across Canada and the United States. The sudden influx put a severe strain on the single telephone line out of Moose River, sometimes leading to fistfights among the press corps. Mines Minister Michael Dwyer devised a scheduling system allowing newspapers use of the telephone for five minutes each hour and the radio station the use of the phone for three minutes every half hour.

Planeloads of Toronto reporters flooded into Nova Scotia, hotly pursued by other reporters from papers across Canada and the United States.

There was a notable absence, however: J. Frank Willis, of the Halifax office of the CRBC. His bosses in Ottawa refused him permission to go to Moose River.

By Monday evening, rescue workers arriving from across Nova Scotia and Northern Ontario were severely hampered by the dropping temperatures and icy winds. Roads had turned into a muddy soup. Two days later, Billy Bell, the provincial government's diamond driller, was ordered to the scene. Thursday at noon, with 150 rescue workers in attendance and an emergency field hospital ready and waiting, he and his three-man crew began drilling.

On Saturday, April 18, at 1:30 P.M., a little more than forty-eight hours after the drilling began, Bell and his crew broke through into the chamber where the men were trapped. They removed the drill rods and Bell shouted down the pipe several times, but received no reply. Convinced that the three men were dead, those in charge of the rescue ordered Bell to remove his equipment and return to New Glasgow. But Bell disobeyed and remained on the job. He tried sending a bright red flare down the drill pipe, but there was no response. Then, shortly after midnight, he hooked up a steam whistle and sent down a shrill, piercing blast. Listening at the opening, he finally heard a faint tapping at the other end of the pipe.

The news of the breakthrough sent newspapers in Canada and the United States rushing out extra editions with bold headlines informing their readers that the men were still alive. All three were wet, cold, and suffering severe stomach cramps from lack of food, the reports said; Magill was in the worst shape.

The drill pipe became a lifeline through which candles, matches, chocolate, hot soup, medicine, and brandy were lowered down to the trapped men. In time, a small microphone was sent down the pipe so they could talk to their anxious wives and their rescuers. Meanwhile, water in the lower mine workings – rising at an alarming rate – threatened to drown them before the rescuers could reach them. Then, on Monday morning, Magill died of pneumonia. For him the long ordeal was over.

Meanwhile, Frank Willis cooled his heels in his Halifax office. Again he telephoned his bosses in Ottawa for permission to go to the mine site and again was told to stay put. Finally, late Monday morning, April 20, eight days after the cave-in, Willis received a call from Ottawa granting him permission to go to the scene and broadcast.

Arrangements were made with Maritime Tel and Tel and Canadian Pacific Telegraph to clear and maintain lines for broadcast. By noon, Willis, two technicians, his equipment, and a table microphone were on their way by car to Moose River. He wasn't graciously received by the newsmen who had been there for the past week. They knew his broadcasts to radio stations across Canada and the United States would eliminate their almost exclusive newspaper coverage. They were doubly upset when they learned that he was to be patched directly into the telephone system.

At 6 P.M. that evening Willis made his first broadcast to fifty-eight CRBC stations across Canada and 650 stations in the United States. The BBC in London also picked up the broadcasts for Great Britain and Europe. This massive hookup of radio stations made radio history in North America. His first broadcast, bringing his vast radio audience up to date, lasted almost fifteen minutes and was considered one of the longest on record. It began with the words "This is the Canadian Radio Commission broadcasting

from Moose River, Halifax County." From then until midnight, two-minute reports were broadcast every half hour informing listeners on the plight of the men and the progress of the rescue operation. Some sponsors in the United States shortened their programs by two minutes in order to carry his live news reports. An estimated 100 million people across North America stayed by their radios to listen.

Finally, at 11:40 P.M. on Wednesday, April 22, the rescue workers broke into the underground chamber that held the two remaining survivors. A little over an hour later, Dr. Robertson appeared on the surface. After embracing his wife and thanking his rescuers, he was hurried off to the nearby field hospital. Members of the Salvation Army, who had arrived over muddy, rutted roads the day before to make coffee and pass out doughnuts, led the rescue workers in singing "Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow."

About sixteen minutes later Scadding arrived on the surface and was also rushed to the field hospital. Two of the rescue workers returned down the mine to retrieve Magill's body.

Willis broadcast the happy news to the world that the men were alive and back on the surface after a ten-day ordeal. He made his final broadcast at 2:00 A.M. on Thursday morning. In all, he made ninety-nine broadcasts, a record for on-the-spot news coverage. In doing so, he helped make radio more than just a source of entertainment – he made it a quick, reliable news medium.

Within hours, reporters filed their final stories, packed their gear, and headed to Halifax to catch planes home, returning Moose River to its former obscurity.

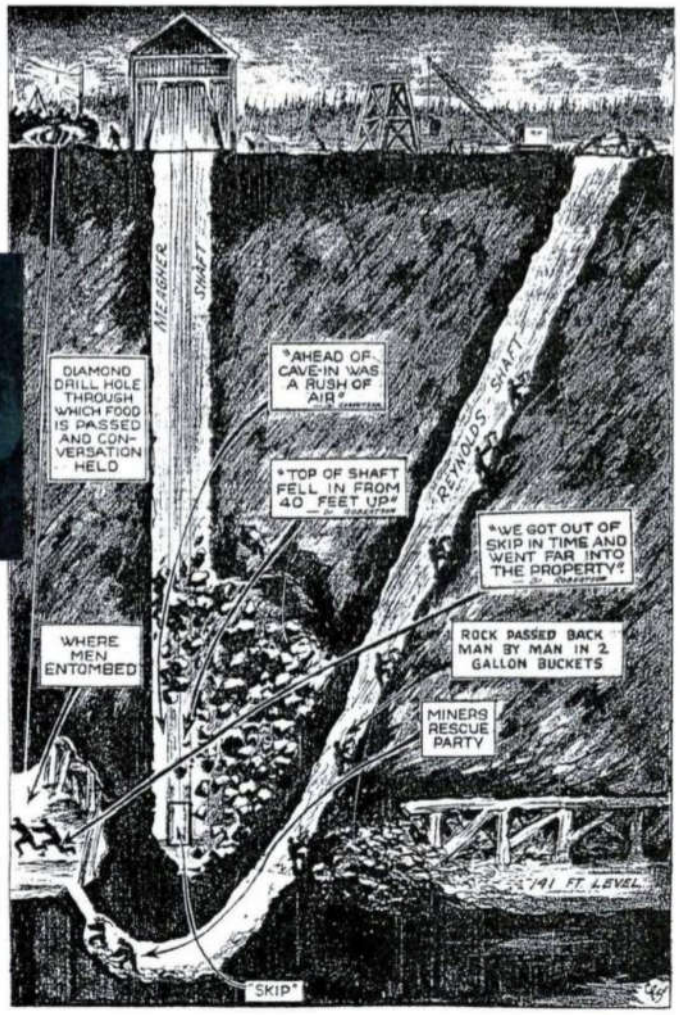
Eight years after his rescue, Robertson died in Toronto. Scadding, who died in the early 1960s, said that if it were not for the newspapers and the radio they might not have been saved. While most of the officials in charge of the rescue had given them up for dead, the news media had so aroused the public that abandoning the rescue would have been ill-advised.

Willis, suddenly popular, was deluged with lucrative offers from the United States to make endorsements and public appearances, but he refused. Two years after Moose River, he went to Australia as an exchange producer with the Australian Broadcasting Commission. In 1939, he returned to CBC's Toronto office where he produced radio documentaries. From 1958 to 1963 he appeared as host of several television public affairs programs. He died at his Toronto home on October 26, 1969, from a heart attack.

Today a stone cairn and bronze plaque mark the site where the heroic rescue captivated millions of radio listeners across North America for ten days and created a new type of journalism. Canadian Press voted the Moose River mine rescue the top radio news story for the first half of the twentieth century. The genesis of today's live, on-the-spot coverage of world events lies in the small mining village of Moose River, Nova Scotia. ◘

Harry Chapman is a writer living in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.

COURTESY HARRY CHAPMAN


MEAGHER SHAFT
REYNOLDS SHAFT
DIAMOND DRILL HOLE THROUGH WHICH FOOD IS PASSED AND CONVERSATION HELD
"AHEAD OF CAVE-IN WAS A RUSH OF AIR"
"TOP OF SHAFT FELL IN FROM 40 FEET UP"
"WE GOT OUT OF SKIP IN TIME AND WENT FAR INTO THE PROPERTY"
WHERE MEN ENTOMBED
ROCK PASSED BACK MAN BY MAN IN 2 GALLON BUCKETS
MINERS RESCUE PARTY
141 FT. LEVEL
"SKIP"

A composite drawing of the cave-in (right) by a staff artist at Toronto's *Evening Telegram*, published April 22, 1936, the final day of the ordeal.

The drill pipe (above) where diamond driller Billy Bell broke through to the entombed men and through which food and medicine were lowered. Eventually a small microphone was passed down to let the trapped men talk to their wives and rescue workers.

et cetera

It Happened at Moose River, by David E. Stephens. Lancelot Press Limited, Windsor, Nova Scotia, 1997.

An audio sample of J. Frank Willis's broadcasts from the Moose River mine site can be heard at <www.rcc.ryerson.ca/schools/rta/ccf/news/early.html>.

Open July and August, the Moose River Gold Mine Museum, twenty-five kilometres east of Middle Musquodoboit, Nova Scotia, tells the history of gold mining in the area with a special emphasis on the 1936 disaster.

The Life & Times of Pierre de Sales Laterrière

Post-conquest Quebec was a society in flux. New leaders, new laws, new thought challenged the old verities of New France. Into this Enlightenment milieu stepped Pierre de Sales Laterrière, a free thinker whose clashes with state and church were all too inevitable.

BOTH PHOTOS COURTESY PIERRE DE SALES LATERRIÈRE

In September 1766, three years after New France falls to the English, a young man named Pierre de Sales Laterrière arrives in the new English province of Quebec. He is a member of the rural *petite noblesse* in the Albi region of southern France, but, as the second son of a count, he has few illusions of inheriting. At the invitation of an uncle who traded into New France, he decides instead to seek his fortune in Canada.

Laterrière is restive, a man of action with an inventive mind and an adventurous spirit. And he lives through a period of tumultuous change. The last decades of the eighteenth century are a time of intellectual ferment in which the old faith-based truths are challenged by a new conviction in education, rationalism, and critical thinking. This new thought is embodied in the American Revolution, which advances the principle of the self-determination of peoples, and the French Revolution, which ends the hegemony of a feudal aristocracy. In Canada, the

by Bernard Andrès

Previous page, from top: ***Pierre de Sales Laterrière*** *was born in southern France in 1743 and arrived in Quebec in the fall of 1766, three years after New France was ceded to the English. Inventive and energetic, he progressed through a number of careers over the subsequent half century, including clerk, salesman, ironworks manager, doctor, pharmacist, inventor, and memoirist. When Quebec passed a new law requiring doctors to show proof of training, Laterrière went to Boston to study medicine at Harvard College. He was also closely connected to the progressive thinkers in the political and philosophical debates of the late eighteenth century in Quebec, and in London became one of the first Canadian members of the Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce. His two sons also became doctors.*

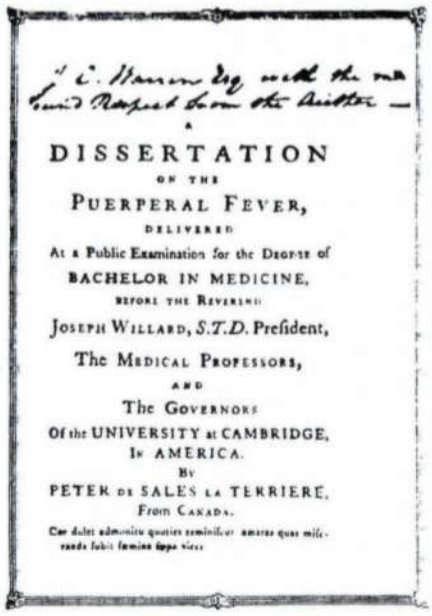
Marie-Catherine Delezenne*, though in love with Pierre, married Christophe Pélissier, the forty-five-year-old director of the Saint-Maurice Ironworks in Trois Rivières in 1775, likely at the insistence of her father. The marriage only endured as a formality. Pélissier became embroiled with British authorities for trading with the American rebels during the Revolutionary War and left permanently for France in 1779. Meanwhile, in defiance of the church and polite society, Catherine and Pierre began cohabiting. In 1778, she bore him the first of three children. They did not marry until 1799 when Catherine was finally legally declared a widow.*

Quebec Act of 1774 guarantees the religious freedom of the colony's Roman Catholic majority, and the Constitutional Act of 1791, though it limits the powers of elected colonial assemblies, is the first step on the path to Confederation. The adventure of Pierre de Sales Laterrière is Canada's following the Conquest: When he steps off the ship in Quebec City in 1766, he encounters a society in transition. A new francophone bourgeoisie, with social, intellectual, and entrepreneurial aspirations, is on the rise. Educated in Enlightenment-era France, he soon aligns himself with the forces of progress. Doors open for him. But he also gets into trouble.

Laterrière begins his professional life as an assistant at the Saint-Maurice Ironworks, which Guy Carleton, governor of Quebec, attempts to revive to boost the province's economy. He rises through the ranks quickly. At the same time, he falls in love with Catherine Delezenne, daughter of a Quebec goldsmith, but despite their attachment, at her father's insistence she marries the director of the ironworks, Christophe Pélissier, who is forty-five to her twenty. It is 1775. That year, Pélissier begins supplying cannonballs to the American army, which is advancing toward Quebec. Early in 1776, convicted of complicity with the American enemy, he flees, leaving his post – and his wife – to Laterrière, who manages the ironworks for the next three years and – much to the disapproval of the community – begins to cohabit with Catherine.

But Laterrière, too, gets convicted of collusion with the Americans, the victim of a plot hatched by Pélissier and others, and Frederick Haldimand, the province's new governor, imprisons him without trial. Laterrière spends three years in prison, sharing a cell with Fleury Mesplet and Valentin Jautard, publisher and reporter respectively for the *Gazette de Montréal*, which was the centre of the Enlightenment in Montreal and critical of intolerance, abuses of the clergy, and the feudal system. In his memoirs Laterrière also mentions another prisoner, Pierre du Calvet, a judge and pamphleteer jailed for his denunciations of the administration of justice in the colony. To kill time in jail, he pursues the study of medicine and manages his personal affairs. Freed in 1782, Laterrière exiles himself to Newfoundland until hostilities between Britain and its American colonies cease.

In June 1783, with America independent, Laterrière returns to Quebec where he takes up the practice of medicine and serves as an apothecary in the Bécancour region, across the St. Lawrence River from Trois-Rivières. There he rejoins Catherine Delezenne. The next five years are active ones for him professionally. It is also a restive period in the province's history, and Laterrière joins in the political debate over the inadequacies of the Quebec Act, which provided neither elected assembly nor proportional French-English representation on the appointed legislative council. Free-debate societies and clubs emerge. Quebec sees a second library open and the Beaver Club, founded in 1785, draws the cream of Montreal society to its social activities. Freemasonry, anticlerical in tone, grows among French-Canadians, and Laterrière joins one of its lodges.


A
DISSERTATION
ON THE
PUERPERAL FEVER,
DELIVERED
At a Public Examination for the Degree of
BACHELOR IN MEDICINE,
BEFORE THE REVEREND
JOSEPH WILLARD, S.T.D. President,
THE MEDICAL PROFESSORS,
AND
THE GOVERNORS
Of the UNIVERSITY at CAMBRIDGE,
IN AMERICA.
BY
PETER DE SALES LA TERRIERE,
From CANADA.

Frontispiece for Laterrière's Harvard thesis on puerperal fever, an illness resulting from infection following childbirth.

In 1788, however, Laterrière's life is turned upside down by a government ordinance intended to regulate medicine. With no diploma, at age forty-five he leaves for Cambridge, Massachusetts to study medicine. A year later he is the first Canadian laureate of the Harvard School of Medicine. His thesis is on puerperal fever, an illness resulting from infection following childbirth. Returning to Quebec in 1789, he resumes his practice around Baie-du-Febvre, on the south shore of the St. Lawrence, and at Trois-Rivières, and begins to busy himself promoting education and training among the province's physicians and midwives. In the spring of 1791, he petitions the province's legislative council to permit the establishment of a midwifery training course, offering to teach the course himself without pay. His address to the civil authorities is infused with the spirit of the age. Declaring his wish to "dedicate his

services to the public," he denounces ignorance and "the rank superstition of the people that prevents carrying out useful projects for the conservation of the human race." (Unfortunately, Laterrière's project is not realized until two centuries later when the Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières institutes a midwifery degree course.)

However, the medical practice he has built in Trois-Rivières is soon undone when he performs a public autopsy on the remains of a woman who had just been hanged. The bishop immediately prohibits the Ursuline nuns from using Laterrière's services. Condemned by the clergy, who already rebuke him for continuing to live out of wedlock with Catherine Delezenne (who, meanwhile, has borne him two sons and a daughter), he leaves Trois-Rivières with his family and resettles on the south shore. By the late 1790s, however, worried about educating his sons and establishing his daughter, he decides to move to Quebec City. At age fifty-six, he begins a new life – and, at last, a married one. Catherine is finally legally declared a widow, and Laterrière marries her in October 1799. Four months later, their daughter Dorothée is married to a rich Canadian merchant, François Lehoullier, but the marriage proves disastrous. Lehoullier, a homosexual, treats her harshly, but the laws of the Church oblige Dorothée to stay in the marriage for many years before a separation can be negotiated.

These are turbulent times in Lower Canada, as the province is called after 1791. Though French Canadians control the assembly, real power belongs to the English elite who control the executive and legislative councils. Divisions between the British settlers and the Canadiens sharpen. The *Quebec Mercury*, the voice of anglophone middle-class professionals and merchants, advocates the end of the assembly, the union of Upper and Lower Canada, further British immigration, and church submission to state control of education. *Le Canadien*, its francophone counterpart, bitterly opposes these schemes. Laterrière is a member of the francophone elite with links to *Le Canadien*. With eleven other partners, he forms Pierre de Sales Laterrière et Compagnie with plans to lease the Saint-Maurice Ironworks. The lease, however, is awarded to a company of English associates.

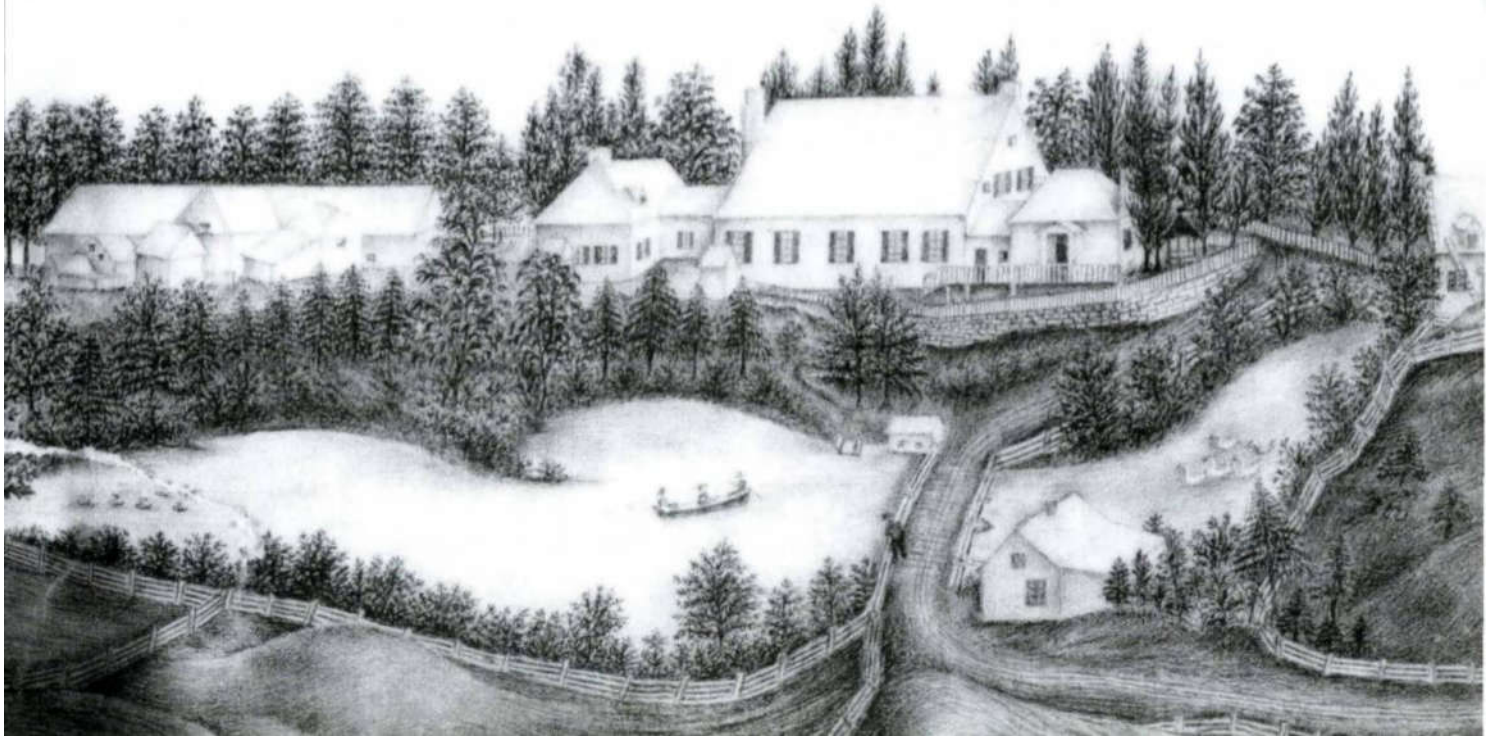
Disappointed by the loss and embittered by political events, Laterrière decides in 1807 to travel to France with his younger son, Marc-Pascal, to claim the title to Saint-Salvy near Albi, vacant since his elder brother's death. But Napoleon is waging war in Europe. Laterrière lands in Portugal. As a Canadian, and thus a British subject, he is advised not to go to France. With Napoleon's army sweeping toward Lisbon, Laterrière is forced to flee with the British fleet. Against his will, he finds himself in London.

Laterrière, though in his sixties, resumes his busy life – practising medicine, teaching midwifery, and lecturing on, among other topics, the virtues of hemp cultivation and the latest developments in intensive care.

In the British capital, however, he is swept up in the excitement of the cultural scene, visiting the British Museum, attending performances at Covent Garden, and viewing Turner's paintings. He rubs shoulders with members of the Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA) and becomes one of a handful of Canadians to be elected a corresponding member. His inaugural speech is on growing hemp in Canada – a vital topic as the British government is looking to equip its growing fleet with the best rope.

On his return to Quebec in the summer of 1808, Laterrière, though in his sixties, resumes his busy life – practising medicine, teaching midwifery, and lecturing on, among other

Les Éboulements, Laterrière's home in Charlevoix, which he purchased five years before his death in 1815.

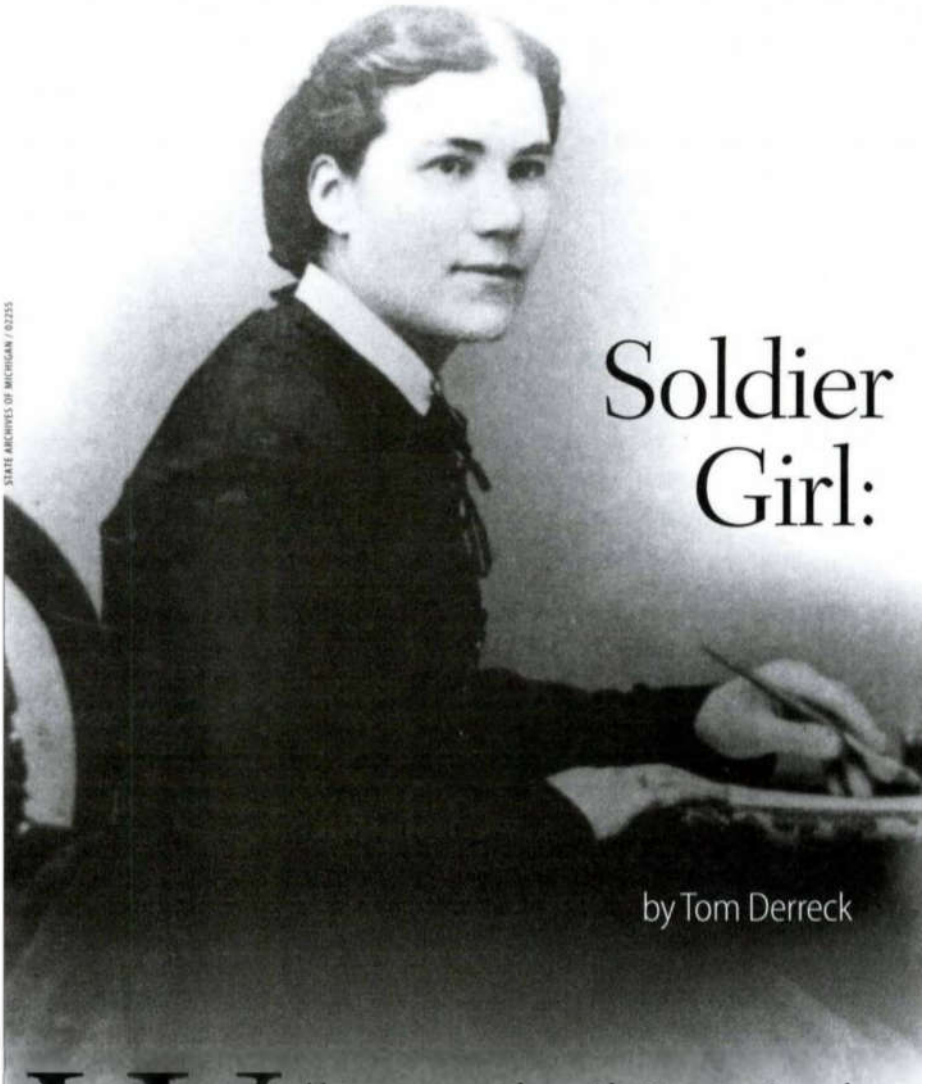


topics, the virtues of hemp cultivation and the latest developments in intensive care. Always intellectually curious, he also begins a French translation of *Inquiry into the Cause and Effects of the Variolae Vaccinae*, the discoverer of vaccination Edward Jenner's seminal work.

In the last years of his life, Laterrière purchases and manages an estate, Les Éboulements, near Quebec City at Charlevoix and begins to write his memoirs (which are finally published in 1873). But he has a final wish – to resolve his claim to his late brother's title, which was thwarted by Napoleon in 1805. In March 1815, he sends his eldest son Pierre-Jean to France to represent his family's interests, but, once again, Napoleon intrudes. The deposed emperor escapes exile in Elba and reaches Paris March 20, intent on restoring his empire. Landing in Bordeaux, Pierre-Jean is urged to flee French territory, even though he passes himself off as an American. Like his father, he finds himself in London. It is there that he learns of his father's death, June 14, 1815.

Laterrière's sons never inherit the French noble title. But Laterrière's legacy to his family is a reformist and entrepreneurial spirit. Both Pierre-Jean and Marc-Pascal become doctors. As one of a group of physicians, the former will found a free clinic for the needy in Quebec City and offer the first courses in medicine. He will run unsuccessfully for election in 1820 and in 1821 be appointed justice of the peace for Quebec. Married to an Englishwoman, he will spend the last eleven years of his life in England managing the fortune left by his father-in-law, only returning to Quebec for a visit, dying there in 1834. Marc-Pascal will sit in the assembly in the 1830s and 1840s, sympathetic to the reformist and nationalist claims of the Parti Canadien. In the first federal election of 1867, he will be defeated as an anti-confederate candidate. He will retire to the estate inherited from his father, outliving his elder brother by thirty-eight years. ◘

Bernard Andrès teaches at the Université du Québec à Montréal. His biography of Pierre de Sales Laterrière, *L'énigme de Sales Laterrière*, is published by Québec Amérique.



STATE ARCHIVES OF MICHIGAN / 02255

Soldier Girl:

by Tom Derreck

Would you even remotely consider impersonating and living as a member of the opposite sex – or as a member of a different race?

How about doing both at the same time, in a foreign land, in conditions of acute physical hardship, and with a likelihood of being maimed or meeting a violent death at any moment?

New Brunswick–born Sarah Emma Evelyn Edmonds did all of that.

Prior to and during the American Civil War, Canada served as a haven for escaped slaves, a base for Confederate covert operations, and a source of volunteers for both the Northern and Southern armies. An estimated 50,000 Canadians went south to fight, most of them intent upon ending the "peculiar institution" – slavery.

Emma was among them.

She was one of an estimated four hundred women who successfully disguised themselves as men and served in combat over the course of that bloody conflict, but her character and astonishing exploits separate her from all the rest. Her memoir *Nurse and Spy in the Union Army*, published in 1865, recounts the story of her remarkable life.

Faced with an abusive father and the certainty of an arranged marriage, Emma Edmonds fled her New Brunswick home at age fifteen and later assumed a masculine guise. She joined the Union Army when the Civil War broke out in 1861. Her true sex remained undetected until illness two years later forced her to end the charade.

She cropped her hair,
donned a uniform,
and became a soldier in
the American Civil
War. No one ever knew
that he was a she.

Until she told them.

The Emma Edmonds Story

Born in 1841, baby Emma fell innocently afoul of her hard and uncompromising father who, in all matters, demanded immediate and complete submission from wife and children alike. Longing for a healthy son to make up for Emma's epileptic older brother, he took instant and unforgiving umbrage at Emma's arriving with the wrong credentials.

Growing up on the family farm in the rural settlement of Magaguadavic near Fredericton, New Brunswick, Emma developed into an accomplished rider, a crack shot, and a strong swimmer by her early teens. Energetic and adventurous, she sought out physical challenge and delighted in climbing to the tops of the tallest trees and buildings.

When she was nine years old, a peddler gave her a book about the adventures of Fanny Campbell, a teenage girl who disguised herself as a man and went sailing to find and free her sweetheart from the clutches of a ruthless band of pirates. Fanny's exploits fired Emma's imagination.

At fifteen, facing the unwelcome prospect of an arranged marriage to an older man, she ran away to live and work with a family friend, making ladies' hats in the town of Salisbury. Within a year, she was co-owner of a millinery shop in Moncton.

Learning of her whereabouts, Emma's father demanded that she return home, but Emma, perhaps inspired by Fanny Campbell, suddenly packed up, moved to Saint John, and there "disappeared" by assuming a male identity.

About her disguise, Emma later explained, "I think I was born into this world with some dormant antagonism toward men – my infant soul was impressed with a sense of my mother's endured wrongs – and I probably drew from her breast with my daily food my love of independence and my hatred of male tyranny."

Cropping her fine, dark hair, tanning her face with stain, and donning a suit of men's clothing, Emma strode out into the world as "Frank Thompson" and landed a job as an itinerant Bible salesman. Her Connecticut-based employer later claimed that of all the salesmen he'd hired over a period of thirty years, no one ever outsold Frank Thompson.

By the fall of 1860, Emma had made her way west to Flint, Michigan, where salesman Frank quickly gained a reputation as an upstanding young fellow. When the Civil War began April 12, 1861, twenty-year-old Emma was fired with loyalty toward her adopted country and went to Detroit to answer the call for volunteers.

The army's perfunctory enlistment physicals rarely required recruits to strip down. So long as an aspiring bit of cannon fodder wasn't blind, lame, missing limbs, or subject to fits, bounty-paid recruiters were happy to speed them into a uniform.

At first, five-foot, six-inch Frank Thompson was turned away for being shy of the army's height standard. However, to advance President Lincoln's call for 75,000 troops, the standard was lowered a couple of weeks later, and Emma tried again. Her physical consisted of little more than answering a few questions and demonstrating a firm handshake. On May 25, 1861, Emma proudly emerged onto the streets of Detroit as Private Frank Thompson, Company F, Second Michigan Volunteer Infantry Regiment.

Like most rural women of her time, Emma was physically strong, used to the outdoors, and – unlike her city-bred fellow recruits – handy with firearms and at home with horses and mules.

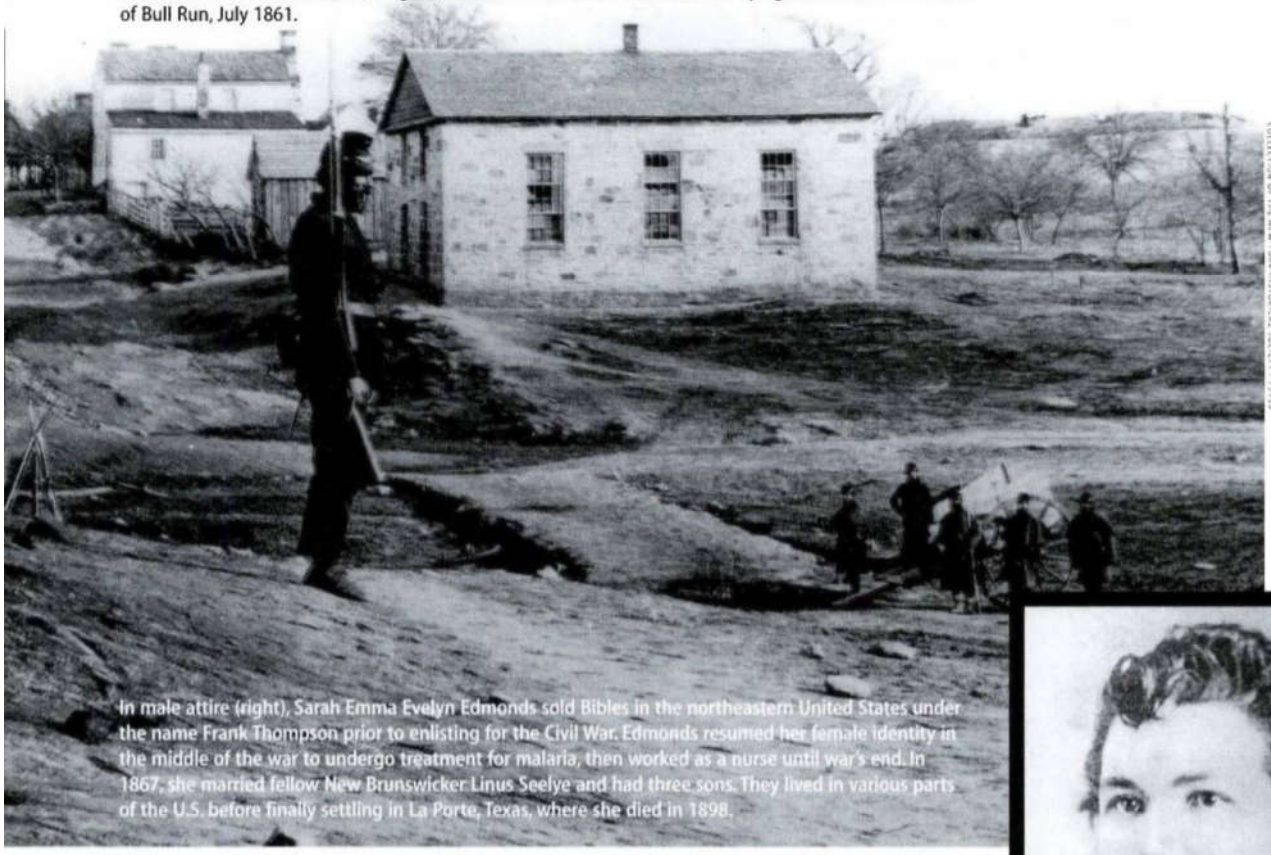
With her regiment filled with hundreds of smooth-faced boys in loose, poorly fitted uniforms, Emma gained easy acceptance as Private Frank Thompson. The prevailing standards of male modesty and hygiene helped her, too. Sleeping fully clothed and bathing in undergarments were common among Civil War soldiers in the field. Shunning the foul-smelling, open-trench pits that passed for latrines, many sought the privacy of nearby woods and freshwater streams to attend to their personal needs. Emma attracted no notice by doing likewise.

When basic training was completed, she was assigned to duty as a male nurse and postman for her brigade.

On July 15, 1861, the Second Michigan was ordered to Bull Run, a stream near the vital railhead at Manassas Junction, Virginia, where Confederate troops were known to be converging. Six days later, Emma was initiated into the realities of war. Standing shoulder to shoulder in the blue ranks, she withstood the trauma of howling artillery shells slicing bloody lanes through compact masses of men, tossing body parts, viscera, and broken weapons and equipment high in the air. The battle, which had begun at six in the morning, turned into a disastrous rout for the Union by four in the afternoon, and Emma found herself pushing through the wreck of the retreating army. At a stone church that had been converted into an emergency field hospital, she encountered fly-ridden heaps of amputated limbs, mutilated flesh, and dead bodies, and volunteered to tend wounded and dying soldiers. Later she wrote that she had "gone to the war with no other ambition than to nurse the sick and care for the wounded. I had inherited from my mother a rare gift of nursing, and when not too weary or exhausted, there was a magnetic power in my hands to soothe the delirium."

In the days following the battle, the beaten remnants of the Union army straggled into Washington. With victorious

The stone church at Centreville, Virginia, where Emma tended wounded and dying soldiers after the Battle of Bull Run, July 1861.



COLLECTION OF THE NEW YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY / 75135

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In male attire (right), Sarah Emma Evelyn Edmonds sold Bibles in the northeastern United States under the name Frank Thompson prior to enlisting for the Civil War. Edmonds resumed her female identity in the middle of the war to undergo treatment for malaria, then worked as a nurse until war's end. In 1867, she married fellow New Brunswicker Linus Seelye and had three sons. They lived in various parts of the U.S. before finally settling in La Porte, Texas, where she died in 1898.

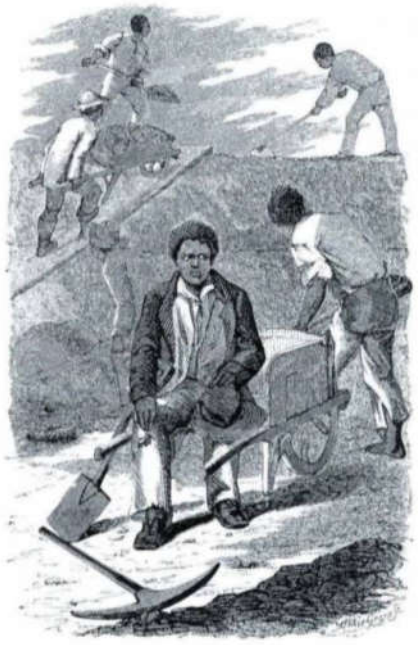
On September 17, 1862, in the Battle of Antietam (below), 23,000 soldiers were killed or wounded – the bloodiest single-day battle in American history. The battle in Maryland, the first major Civil War engagement on Northern soil, halted Confederate general Robert E. Lee's bold invasion of the North and was a turning point in the four-year conflict.

COLLECTION OF THE NEW YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY / 75140

Southern flags fluttering within easy sight, citizens feared imminent invasion and government authorities contemplated evacuation.

Arriving in the beleaguered city in search of her comrades, Emma visited temporary hospitals, gave care to friends and strangers alike, and penned letters for the many too weak to do it for themselves. She wrote that "that extraordinary march from Bull Run, through rain, mud and chagrin, did more toward filling the hospitals than did the battle itself. There are great strong men dying all around me, and while I write, there are three being carried past the window to the dead room."

Within weeks of the disastrous bat-



According to her 1865 memoir, *Nurse and Spy in the Union Army*, from which this illustration is taken, Edmonds disguised herself as a black slave and passed into the Confederate camp.

tle, President Lincoln appointed a new military commander, General George B. McClellan, who began whipping the disorganized mobs of soldiers into an army again. As the Northern divisions regained their warlike spirit, Emma found a new confidence. She was appointed postmaster of her brigade and she routinely galloped forty kilometres a day to pick up and deliver bags of letters and packages. It was dangerous work, and on one occasion she rode through papers strewn over the very ground where a fellow postman had been ambushed and shot the day before.

Emma wrote that "that extraordinary march from Bull Run, through rain, mud and chagrin, did more toward filling the hospitals than did the battle itself."

Emma successfully soldiered through the great Virginia campaigns of 1862, including the bloodbaths at the battles of Second Bull Run, Fredericksburg, and Antietam, where the Union regiments were savagely raked and winnowed.

When a Union agent was hanged for spying, she volunteered to take his place. Though interviewed by a panel of high-ranking officers for the dangerous work, she still managed to conceal her true sex. Ever resourceful, she shaved her head, blackened her skin with silver nitrate, donned a plantation suit and a curly black wig, and passed into the Confederate camp at Yorktown as a slave answering to the name "Cuff." Mingling with a gang of black labourers, she hauled wheelbarrows of gravel to workers atop an eight-foot wall. The hot, sweaty work caused the silver nitrate to begin to fade. At one point, a slave pointed at Emma and exclaimed, "Durned if'n that feller ain't turnin' white." Quick-witted Emma countered, "I've always expected to come white, my mother's a white woman."

After a day of manhandling heavy loads of gravel, Emma's wrists and hands were horribly blistered, but she saved herself by talking another slave into changing jobs with her. For the next two days Emma moved about the camp as a water bearer, all the time watching, listening, and even managing to make rough sketches of the enemy fortifications.

Overhearing someone loudly haranguing a group of soldiers in a familiar voice, she recognized the speaker as a peddler who visited the Union lines once a week to sell newspapers and stationery. He was describing the Northern camp in detail, using a map displaying its layout and troop dispositions. "He was a fated man from that moment," Emma later remembered. "His life was not worth three cents."

During the night of the third day, she was surprised to be handed a musket and told to take a position on the picket line. When an opportune moment arrived, Cuff slipped away in the darkness and, rebel musket in hand, made a safe return to her own headquarters. Assisted by the information provided by Emma, General McClellan bombarded the Confederate fortifications with such accuracy that the rebels were soon forced to abandon them.

On other occasions, Emma slipped across enemy lines as an Irish immigrant woman and as a black female slave. In the latter guise, complete with calico bandana, she once ended up cooking rations at Confederate headquarters, within watching distance of Confederate commander General Robert E. Lee.

At the bloody Battle of Antietam, Emma came across a young soldier, severely wounded in the neck and near death. As she gave him comfort, the youth confided that he was actually a female, enlisted as a man to be near her only brother, who had been killed earlier in the day. To protect the secret according to the youth's dying wish, Emma buried her nearby, "without coffin or shroud, only a blanket for a winding sheet." With poetry, she gave expression to the heart-rending experience:

> *Her race is run. In southern clime,*
> *She rests among the brave;*
> *Where perfumed blossoms gently*
> *fall, Like tears, around her grave.*
> *No loving friends are near to weep,*
> *Or plant bright flowers there;*
> *But birdlings chant a requiem*
> *sweet, And strangers breathe a*
> *prayer.*
> *She sleeps in peace; yes sweetly*
> *sleeps, Her sorrows are all o'er;*
> *With her the storms of life are past:*
> *She's found the heavenly shore.*

On March 20, 1863, Emma was transferred to Louisville, Kentucky. Disguised as a young Kentucky lad, she went spying again. Arriving at an outlying village, she found a wedding in progress. The bridegroom was a captain of rebel cavalry on the lookout for

Women Soldiers in the Civil War

Why did so many women, up to 250 in the Confederate armies and 400 in the Union, disguise themselves as men to fight in the American Civil War?

Women played prominent roles during the war as nurses, cooks, laundresses, and camp followers. Sometimes they even found it necessary to take up arms and defend themselves when caught in the thick of fighting. All of these roles were accepted, even honoured, by the soldiers and the public.

The case was different for those women who disguised themselves as men in order to fight. If discovered at all, they were discharged and presumed to be of questionable moral character. Their bravery in battle was often forgotten in favour of the sensational story of their cross-dressing. These women were viewed as aberrations, and yet it is speculated that hundreds served in the war this way. Clearly this phenomenon was not so isolated as is generally assumed.

The image of the woman warrior is not uncommon. Many precedents appear in the myths and histories of various cultures throughout time. Though the Amazons and Joan of Arc are most well known, others exist. Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine led a force of women dressed as men, armed and on horseback, in the Second Crusade of the twelfth century. In the eighteenth century a British woman, Mary Read, disguised as a man, served in the infantry and the cavalry in the War of the Spanish Succession before becoming a pirate. Deborah Sampson, Margaret Corbin, and Nancy Hart all fought in the American Revolution.

According to the Edmonds memoir, another cross-dressing soldier – before dying – told Emma that she had enlisted as a man to be nearer her only brother. To keep the secret, Edmonds agreed to bury the woman herself.

Cross-dressing women warriors also existed in the literature of the era. Maturin Murray Ballou's *Fanny Campbell, the Female Pirate Captain* was published in 1845. *The Female Volunteer*, published 1851, detailed the exploits of a woman who fought in the Mexican War. During the Civil War, novels such as *The Lady Lieutenant: The Strange and Thrilling Adventures of Madeline Moore* and *Dora, The American Amazon* were popular.

Though many women joined the war effort disguised as men for the love of a man, the love of adventure, or the love of country, historian Elizabeth Leonard speculates a fourth motivation: money. Records indicate that a large portion of Civil War women were from less affluent backgrounds and may have appreciated the opportunities afforded by fighting the war as men. Immigrants, working-class women, and farm girls – women accustomed to hard work – were more apt to sign up to fight than middle-class women, who opted more often to become nurses.

Why did so many women choose to fight in the Civil War? For the same reasons as the men – adventure, patriotism, a sense of duty. Some women followed lovers or husbands or brothers; some wanted to escape oppressive and confining domestic situations and better their circumstances, both socially and financially. Both Union and Confederate armies became increasingly desperate for volunteers as the war progressed, and it is conceivable that some soldiers chose to turn a blind eye to their effeminate comrades. The simple act of cutting their hair short and donning pants gave these women a freedom they had never known, a freedom they had only imagined. ⚜

—Sarah Burton

likely recruits. Stopping to ask for a bite to eat, Emma was noticed by the captain and found herself conscripted into a unit of mounted rebel troops.

Next day, outfitted as a Confederate trooper, she rode out to engage the Yankees. "I did not despair," Emma later wrote, "but trusted in Providence and my own ingenuity to escape from this dilemma."

Encountering a detachment of Union cavalry, a fight broke out. In the melee, Emma contrived for her horse to become unmanageable and appear to accidentally send her across Union lines. Luckily, once across, she was recognized and protected. Returning to the fight, Emma was spotted by the captain who had forced her into rebel service. Enraged and determined to skewer her on the point of his sabre, he charged, only to receive the contents of Emma's pistol in his face. "This act made me the center of attention," Emma recalled. "Every rebel seemed determined to have the pleasure of killing me first. I escaped without receiving a scratch, but my horse was badly cut across the neck with a sabre."

Although commended for her performance, Emma was barred from spying in the area again lest she be recognized and hanged from the nearest tree. She observed, "Not having any particular fancy for such an exalted position, I turned my attention to more quiet and less dangerous duties."

However, Emma had one more mission to perform before retiring from espionage – to help break up a Confederate spy ring operating out of Union-occupied Louisville. Passing herself off as "Charles Mayberry," she got herself a menial job with a local merchant of rabidly outspoken southern views. Over a number of weeks, Emma gained the merchant's trust and feigned an interest in enlisting in the Confederate service. The merchant obligingly introduced her to a Confederate agent who in turn told her about a sutler spying for the South while selling supplies to Union soldiers, and about a second southern agent who came and went as a photographer selling pictures to Union generals. With Emma's information, the Louisville spy ring was duly put out of business. Later, in 1863, while posted to a military hospital near Vicksburg, Missis-

sippi, Emma contracted malaria. Unable to admit herself for treatment for fear of betraying her true sex, she travelled to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where she put on a dress and checked into a hospital.

She raised three sons, one of whom enlisted in the U.S. Army "just like Mama did."

Cured and on her way back to her unit a few weeks later, Emma was shocked to come across an army bulletin posted in the window of a newspaper office that listed her nom de guerre, Frank Thompson, as a deserter. The offence was punishable by death.

With her military career finished, Emma used the last of her funds to go by train to Washington where, as Sarah Edmonds, she worked as a nurse for the United States Christian Sanitary Commission until the end of the war. In 1865, Emma recorded her civil war experiences in a memoir titled *Nurse and Spy in the Union Army: Comprising the Adventures and Experiences of a Woman in Hospitals, Camps and Battlefields*. It became a bestseller, and Emma donated all of her royalty earnings to the U.S. War Relief Fund.

Homesick for Canada, she returned for a visit, accompanied by Linus Seelye, a fellow New Brunswicker whom she'd met and fallen in love with while nursing in Harper's Ferry, Virginia, in 1864. She and Linus were married in 1867 and raised three sons, one of whom enlisted in the U.S. Army "just like Mama did."

In 1883, Emma visited Flint, Michigan, and looked up an old army pal, Damon Stewart. Finding him behind a desk in his dry goods store, Emma asked if he might know the present whereabouts of Frank Thompson.

Damon asked, "Are you his mother?"

"No, I'm not his mother," Emma answered.

"His sister, perhaps?" Damon ventured.

Emma took a pencil from Damon's hand and wrote, "Be quiet. I am Frank Thompson!"

"What did I do next?" Damon later recalled to a Flint newspaper reporter. "Sat down. I think, wilted." Of Emma, he said, "She was as tranquil and self-possessed as ever my little friend Frank had been."

When questioned about ever having suspected Frank Thompson's real sex, Damon answered, "Never! We jested about the ridiculous little boots and called Frank our 'little woman,' but he took it all in good part."

Carrying the brand of deserter had never settled well with Emma. On her behalf, Damon contacted other men of the old Second Michigan, told them that Frank Thompson had turned up, and that Frank was a woman named Emma Seelye. He asked them to join a writing campaign to seek recognition of Emma's war service. With the added support of former officers and other prominent men who'd known and served with her, a sizable petition was assembled and submitted to the U.S. War Department.

By a special act of the Congress, passed on July 5, 1884, Emma Edmonds was granted an honourable discharge from the United States Army "for her sacrifice in the line of duty, her splendid record as a soldier, her unblemished character, and disabilities incurred in the service." She also received a modest cash bonus and a veteran's pension of twelve dollars a month.

After residing in various U.S. states, Emma and Linus finally settled in La Porte, Texas. There, by virtue of her discharge and veteran's pension, she was duly accepted as a full member of the Grand Army of the Republic, the Union army veterans' organization. She is the only woman ever to be so honoured.

Her last years were plagued with illness – attributed to the extreme conditions and exertions of her war years. They were also difficult financially; sometimes she was nearly destitute.

On the morning of September 5, 1898, Emma's dog, Jack, barked an alarm. Emma had succumbed to a stroke. First buried at La Porte, Emma's remains were disinterred and conveyed to nearby Houston in 1901. There, amid the rhythmic Memorial Day thump of muffled drums, she was buried in the military section of Washington Cemetery – the only female permitted eternal rest in the Civil War veterans' plot.

In 1988, Emma's courage, daring, and contribution to the Union's espionage and military fronts were honoured by her induction into both the United States Military Intelligence Hall of Fame and the State of Michigan Women's Hall of Fame. In her own country, she was elected to New Brunswick's Hall of Fame in 1990.

Although devoted to the cause of her adopted country, Emma always remained a Canadian – heart and soul. Enjoying an off-duty tour of the Senate chamber while on furlough in Washington during the summer of 1862, her memoir records that she came upon two paintings depicting respectively the surrenders of Lord Cornwallis and General Burgoyne to American forces during the Revolutionary War. Her Canadian blood ran hot as she took in the portrayals of Britannia in defeat. "I felt a warm current of blood rush to my face as I contemplated the humiliating scene – the spirit of Johnny Bull triumphed over my Yankee predilections – and I left the building with feelings of humiliation and disgust."

Today, one can easily pass through the older section of Houston's Washington Cemetery and pause to admire a certain beautiful oak tree without noticing the small, weathered marker that lies close beneath it. The eroded letters, barely traceable across the pitted, limestone surface, herald the life of a heroic Canadian who helped preserve the United States and free a people from slavery: EMMA E. SEELYE, ARMY NURSE. ◘

Tom Derreck is a St. Catharines, Ontario, writer.

et cetera

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All the Daring of the Soldier: Women of the Civil War Armies **by Elizabeth D. Leonard. W.W. Norton & Co., New York, 1999.**

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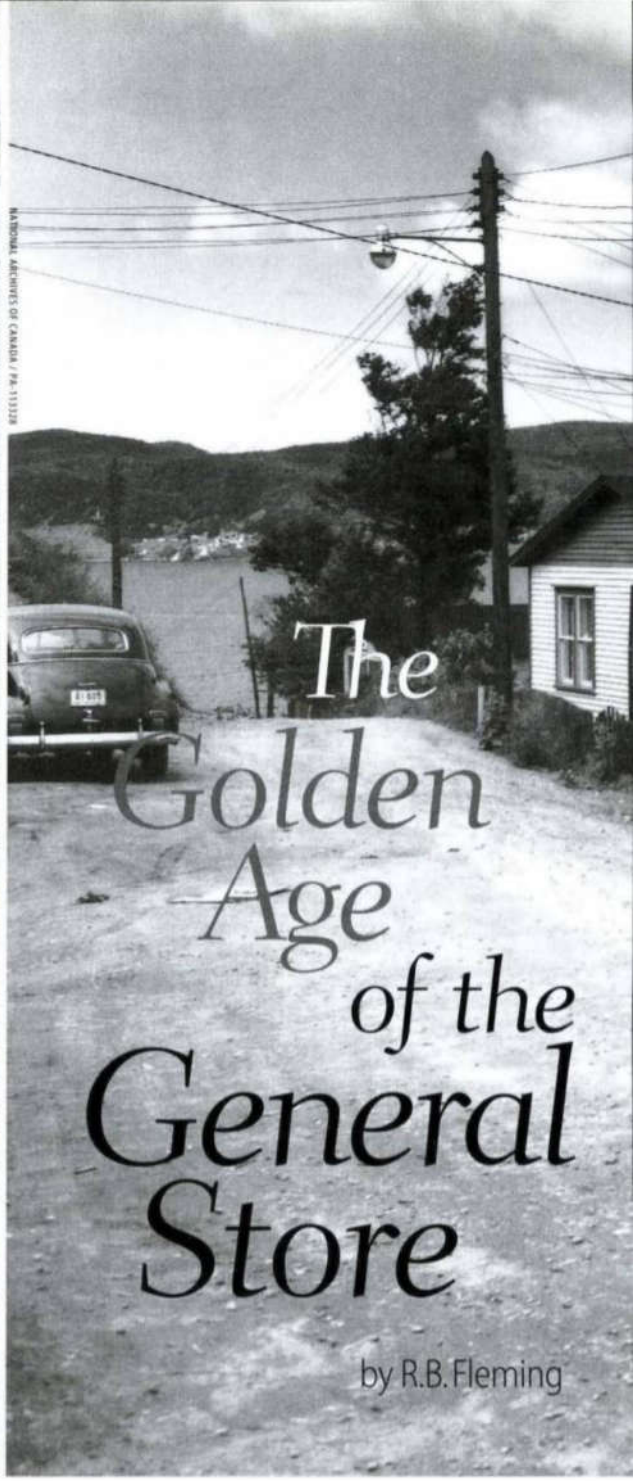


The Golden Age of the General Store

by R.B. Fleming

Clockwise from upper left:
Interior of Edward Gallagher's store at Ketch Harbour, Nova Scotia, in the 1950s. Folklorist Helen Creighton (left) tape records Gallagher on the mouth organ and his son Donald on guitar.

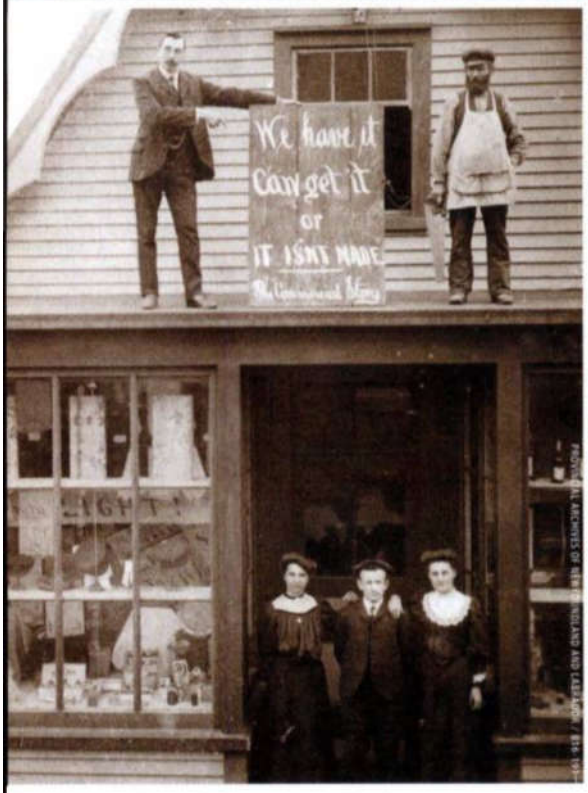
Pafford's General Store in Corner Brook, Newfoundland, in 1961.

Sam Rosner and Abe Brownstone inside Rosner and Brownstone General Store, in Plum Coulee, Manitoba, 1912. Seventy years later Rosner's daughter Saidye Bronfman recalled them selling "everything from nuts and bolts to fine yard goods." Note on the right the fold-down stools and footrest to make choosing a piece of fabric more comfortable for the customer.

In July 1608, when Samuel de Champlain built his *magazin*, the first part of the Quebec *habitation*, he was founding not only a city and a country but also a Canadian tradition that has endured for almost four hundred years.

While there were earlier stores, on St. Croix Island and at Port-Royal in the Maritimes, Champlain's little trading post was the first built in a settlement with a continuous human presence ever since. Thus, when we celebrate the four-hundredth anniversary of Quebec City in 2008, we should also be celebrating an unbroken four hundred years of shopping.

For most of those four hundred years, we have shopped in small retailing establishments: trading posts, northern stores and company stores, merchant or



Clockwise from upper left:
J.D. Irving general store, July 1927, where the Irving Oil empire began.

H. Giegerich General Merchandise in conjunction with H. Byers Hardware, circa 1900, at Sandon, B.C., north of Nelson, a prosperous mining area.

Suzuki's general store on Powell Street, Vancouver, September 9, 1907. Merchants of Asian origin were targetted by anti-Asian mobs during two days of rioting in Vancouver.

Likely used as a promotional postcard around 1910, this photograph of The Commercial Stores in Trinity, Newfoundland expresses owner E.G. Grant's confidence in his ability keep his customers satisfied.

outport stores; and in the thousands of agricultural settlements across the country during the last two centuries and more, we have shopped in general stores. The pattern of Quebec was repeated thousands of times across the country: in most settlements, it was the store that helped found the settlement. Vancouver was founded by a store, the Hastings Mill store, now a museum. In Kindersley, Saskatchewan, once the Canadian Northern Railway chose the site for its station, the first store was in a tent, erected in a few hours.

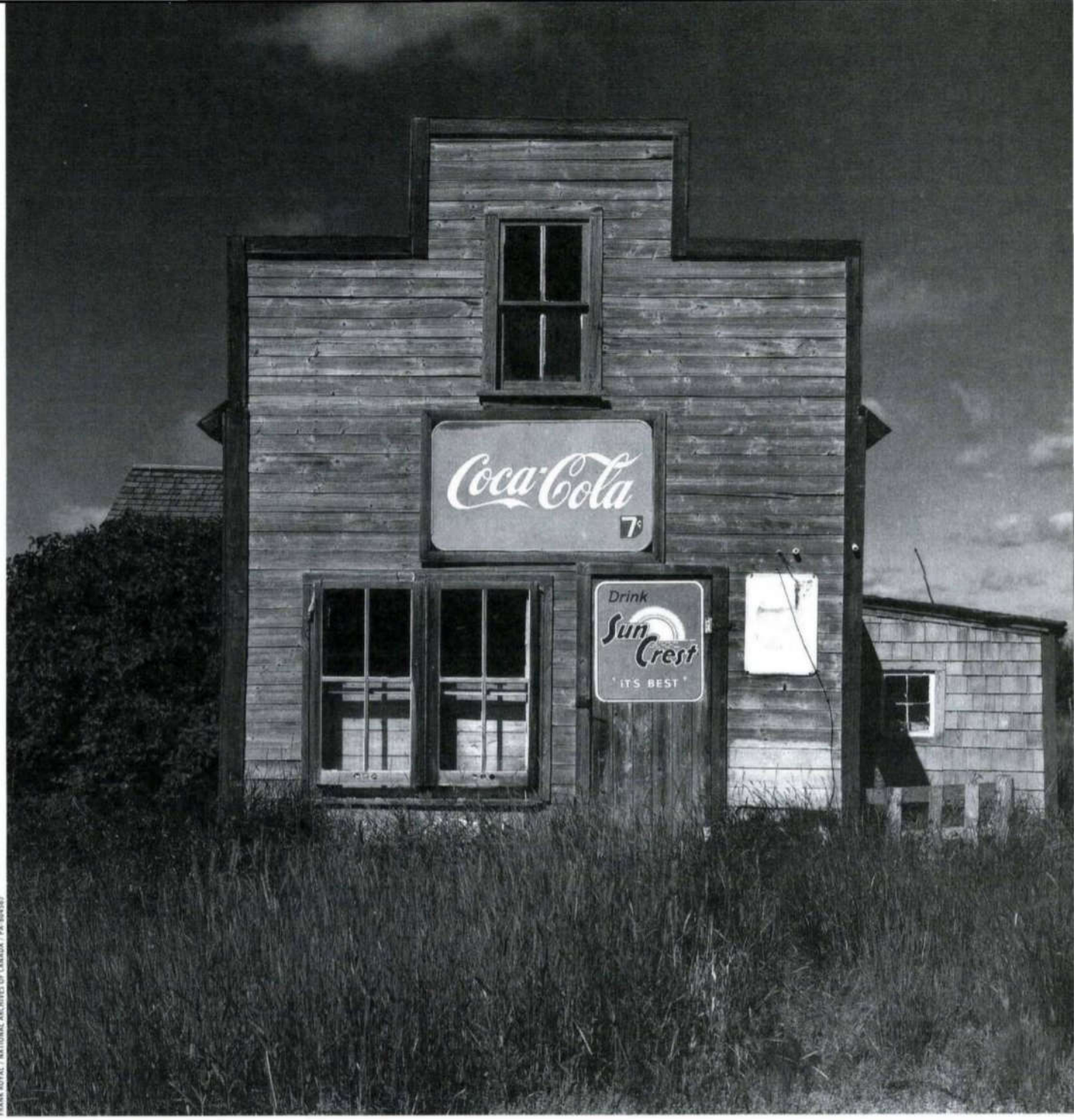
The various terms *store*, *magazine*, and *magasin* (Champlain spelled it with a z) have long roots, dating back a thousand years when Arabs were the preeminent explorers and traders, and the Mediterranean, the centre of world trade. The

Clockwise from upper left:
At Campbellton, Ontario, in the late nineteenth century, customers and keepers pose in front of the general store and post office. A dog, centre, stands on its hind legs, while two pigs check for food.

A typical false storefront in an unknown location in Saskatchewan. The photograph was taken in 1969, but the last time Coke sold for seven cents was in the 1950s.

The J. Clearihue General Store in a tent in Glenora, in northwestern B.C. in 1898. The store packed and shipped goods to the Klondike, which was experiencing a gold rush, first by pack train, later by rail and steamboat. The store sold potatoes at five cents a pound, onions at ten cents a pound, as well as fresh butter, oranges, apples, and lemons, indicating that even the most remote stores could be connected with a global transportation network.

Men gather around the stove in an unidentified general store somewhere in Canada c. 1890.



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term *general store* came into use during the early part of the nineteenth century. In the 1830s, Catherine Parr Traill and Anna Jameson each noted the growth of what they referred to as "general" shops or stores in agricultural settlements of Upper Canada. Many of the first stores began in a room of a merchant's house, and often that merchant was a woman, who carried on household duties while serving her small community.

What most people remember about general stores was the array of goods, from horse harness to cheddar cheese, from flannel work shirts to chewing tobacco – in short, almost anything not produced on the farm. The store teemed with goods, displayed not only on floors and walls but also hanging by hooks from ceilings.

The merchant was paid by a combination of cash, often in short supply, and farm produce, from potash to eggs, chickens, grain, and firewood. Some bills were paid by labour: a blacksmith might shoe the merchant's delivery horses to pay off a bill. Of course there were always customers who found ways to avoid paying. One customer in central Ontario used the line, "Wouldn't you know it! I left my wallet in my other trousers." The credit system was a delicate balancing act, for the merchant had to be careful not to offend a recalcitrant customer while at the same time making certain that the store collected enough money to pay accounts at wholesale houses in nearby cities. One storekeeper ingeniously stole piglets from a farmer who owed a large bill. But that's another story.

Storekeepers themselves played important roles in their communities. They were often fire chiefs and telephone centrals. When asked, they gave advice on marriage and mental depression. In some cases, the storekeeper was appointed justice of the peace. In the evenings, they became club managers who hosted games of checkers and gatherings around the store radio to hear sporting events. Storekeepers witnessed peccadilloes and hypocrisy, and thus they made witty storytellers. One Moncton-area storekeeper was such a good storyteller that he was hired by the CN as an after-dinner speaker.

Not only did they keep people in food and clothing, sometimes as an act of charity, they were also small bankers, lending money when banks were more conservative. Banks often used general storekeepers as their rural agents. The first branch of the now powerful *Caisses de dépôt Desjardins* was inside a little general store in Lévis, opposite Quebec City. Because stores kept pools of cash on hand, to redeem pay or grain cheques, they were often the envy of robbers. John Diefenbaker rarely lost a case, but in 1933, he was unsuccessful in defending a young man who had murdered a storekeeper while stealing a few hundred dollars. The man was hanged the following year.

The golden age of general stores, roughly the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, gradually ended with the motor car, catalogue shopping, and community splintering as well as with the rise of urban department and specialty stores. Today a few general stores operate, mostly in villages and towns far removed from cities. When Canadians "shop" in general stores now, they do so mostly in museums. General stores have also moved into the realm of the imagination. There are stores in novels such as Annie Proulx's *The Shipping News* and W. O. Mitchell's *Who Has Seen The Wind?*; in films such as *Margaret's Museum* and *Mon Oncle Antoine*; and in the *téléroman, Les belles histoires des pays d'en haut*.

As Canadians prepare to celebrate four hundred years of shopping, we could do no better than to reconstruct Champlain's *habitation* with its little *magazin*, built that midsummer of 1608 when Canada began with a store.

R.B. Fleming is a biographer and historian as well as a research associate at the Leslie Frost Centre at Trent University, Peterborough, Ontario. His interest in stores began a week after he was born in May 1944. He was raised in a general store so crammed with merchandise that it earned the titles "Little Eaton's" and "Little Honest Ed's." His book *The General Store in Canada: A Personal Journey* is scheduled for publication by Lynx Images this fall.

History's Floodgate: The Lachine Canal Reopens

by Julie Gedeon

After three decades of sitting idle, the Lachine Canal is back in business.

Pleasure boats are floating daily through the locks and basins that formed the watershed of Canada's industrial beginnings.

The reopening constitutes a $100-million effort by the federal government and Montreal to refurbish the canal and unearth the archaeological treasures along its fourteen-kilometre banks. Locks and walls have been fixed and bridges lifted to create a 2.4-metre clearance that accommodates 85 percent of Quebec's watercraft. Eager for waterfront property near downtown Montreal, private developers have invested another $150 million in condominiums, shops, and offices, dramatically transforming what until recently had been one of Canada's poorest regions.

Once a hub of activity, southwest Montreal witnessed the loss of fifteen thousand jobs between 1957 and 1988 and more than half its population. The dormant canal turned into a dumpsite for discarded furnishings and lives. Twenty-five years ago, bodies surfaced at an average of one a month, if they hadn't purposely been weighed down. Most of the deaths were suicides, but people knew better than to stroll the desolate shores after dark.

Desperate and despicable sorts gave way to hikers and cyclists after Parks Canada tore down the frost fences and turned the canal into a linear park with one of the country's most frequented bike paths. After years of environmental studies, a commission decided it best to leave toxic sediments except where boats might disturb them. Then basins were emptied. "We removed bikes, mattresses, fridges, pic-

nic tables," recalls Claude-Armand Piché, Parks Canada's director for the Lachine Canal revitalization project. "Basin No. 4 has so many cars that it would have been impossible for a boat to cross it."

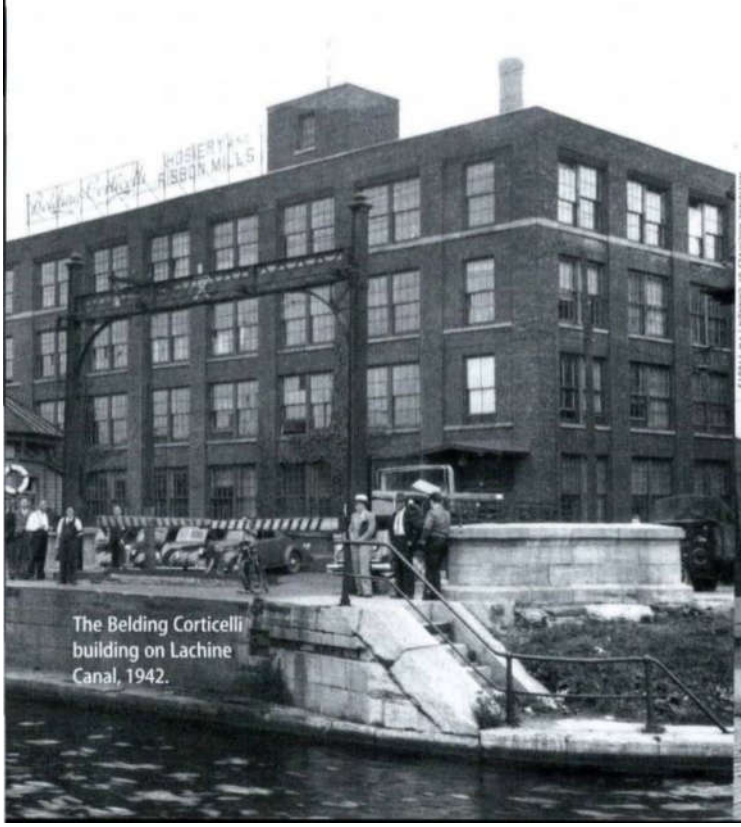
The canal's origins had been much more dignified. François de Salignac Fénelon, the superior of the Sulpician Seminary, first proposed digging a canal in 1670 to circumnavigate the rapids between Lachine and Montreal, but the project never materialized. His successor, François Dollier de Casson, reintroduced the idea in 1680, emphasizing how a canal would provide water for mills and facilitate shipping towards the "up-country." Construction began in 1689, but the Iroquois attack on Lachine halted it. Work resumed in 1700 but was abandoned, ostensibly when funds ran out. Piché contends neither the Indians nor a monetary shortage was to blame. A sparsely populated New France lacked the manpower and equipment to penetrate a kilometre-long stretch that became known as Rock Field. When men finally built the canal between 1821 and 1825, they dug into boulders that still form the walls along this section.

An 1843–1848 expansion accommodated the arrival of larger steam vessels and forced water to gush down each canal level to turn factory wheels and turbines. Industrialists snapped up the water lots that land commissioners put up for rent near the lower locks. They had already heard about the Grand Trunk's plans to establish a railway nearby. The Grand Trunk had selected Pointe St. Charles as midway between Toronto and Portland, Maine, where it hoped to transport goods to a year-round port. "The railway presented numerous spinoff opportunities," notes Yvon Desloges, Parks Canada's coordinator of the canal's historical research. "Towns like Ville St. Pierre sprung up around companies like Canadian Car & Foundry, the most important rolling-stock producer, as people moved to be near work."

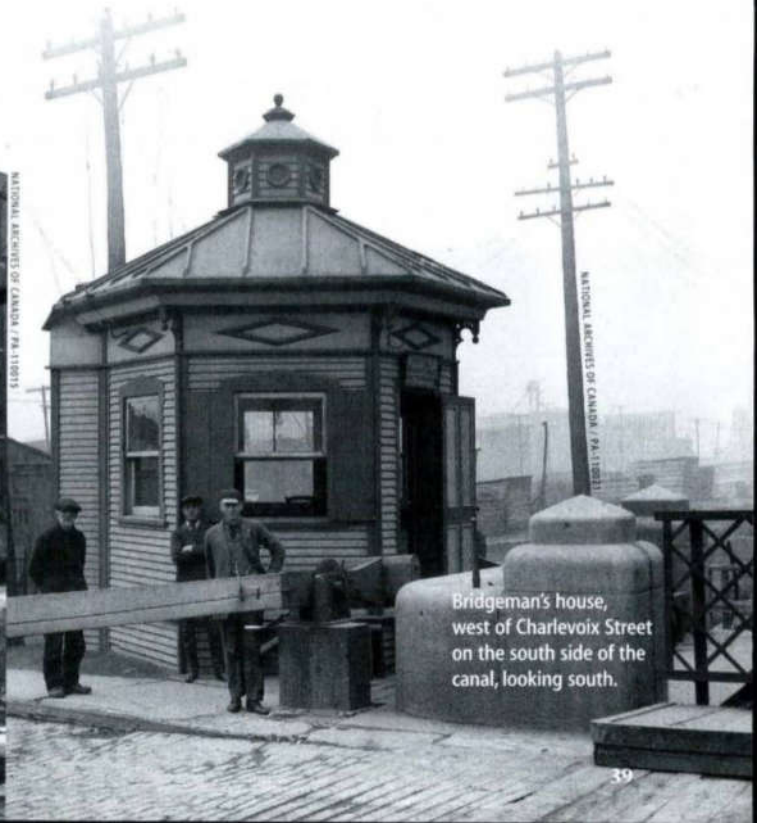
Some forty industries originally used hydraulic power, and the district was dubbed Little Lowell. Unlike the textile mills north of Boston, however, these industries demonstrated greater variety from the start. According to a 1948 classification, all seventeen major types of industry took place alongside the canal at one time or another, including the manufacture of textiles, leather, rubber, electrical appliances, petroleum, iron, and steel. Welcome to the birthplace of Canada's first sugar mill (Redpath), its second largest cotton mill (Merchant's), the country's most important electrical appliance manufacturer (Northern Electric), the Commonwealth's largest mattress producer (Simmons), as well as Montreal Rolling Mills, the forerunner of Stelco, and Dominion Bridge (now Dragon Forgé).

Hydraulic energy's limitations prompted Canada Sugar Refinery (Redpath) to opt for steam. Montreal Rolling Mills and others followed suit, but some companies employed a variety of power for up to a century. The Grand Trunk lugged competitively priced coal from Nova Scotia, Pennsylvania, and as far away as Britain. By 1880, Little Lowell became known as Smokey Valley. "Archaeologists have found a soot coating on everything from that time," Desloges says. "Infant mortality and tuberculosis remained common until the early twentieth century. People worked ten hours a day, Monday through Saturday. Children as young as twelve were hired to keep salaries low."

The Lachine Canal was long the heart of industrial Montreal. But the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway in 1959 made it redundant. Within a few decades, the canal had turned into a forbidding backwater. Now restored, the waterway is once again a hub of activity – and a celebration of its commercial history.



The Belding Corticelli building on Lachine Canal, 1942.


Bridgeman's house, west of Charlevoix Street on the south side of the canal, looking south.

The threat of losing business to American transporters spurred another expansion in 1875. It took until 1899 to complete because work took place only when ice forced the canal's closure for winter. From 1907, the canal operated around the clock six days a week. In 1924, it also opened on Sundays. Up to fourteen thousand vessels passed through the locks seasonally. Canadian and British shipyards built long, narrow vessels they named canallers that carried prairie grain from Thunder Bay and a gamut of goods westward.

World War I prompted the government to seize coal supplies, forcing industrialists to switch to electricity. They resented Montreal Light, Heat & Power's monopoly, but tolerated the utility's rates until peace eased production demands. "There were no industrial tariffs, whereas in Toronto you had Ontario Hydro since 1906," Desloges explains. "Electricity is one reason for the corridor's erosion."

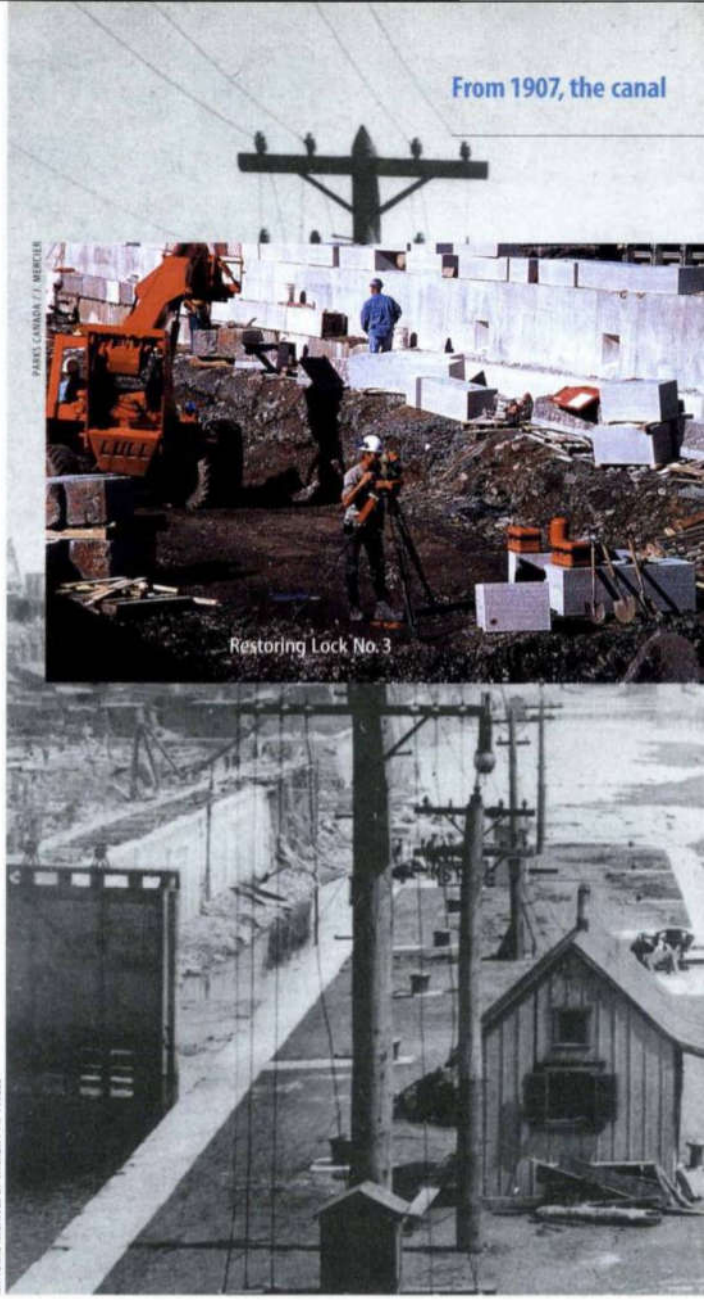
From 1950, when the St. Lawrence Seaway's construction was announced, the canal became neglected. Most boats switched to the seaway when it opened in 1959, and numerous companies moved away over the next few years. The canal was kept partially operating to deliver coal to some enterprises, but developers filled several basins with soil excavated for the metro system. By 1970, only Montreal Coke & Manufacturing still received coal by boat. It joined others in switching to rail when the canal shut down in November of that year. Few companies remained. Dominion Wadding, a company that produced stuffing materials, continued to operate until March 2001, when it succumbed to complaints from condo owners whose buildings surrounded the factory. "It was still using some nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century machinery," Desloges laments. "It all sold as scrap. I would have taken it myself, it was so unbelievable."

Fortunately, more than 25,000 artifacts endure, based on an inventory Parks Canada initiated in 1998. They include locks, buildings, machinery, and the hydraulic networks used to power the first machines. "The quantity and size are mind-boggling," confirms Gisèle Piédalue, Parks Canada's senior archaeologist, "but a lot is on private land. It's essential at least to document what's there before developers excavate." Traces of Dominion Flour Mills, Essotech (Imperial Oil), Stelco, and a half-dozen other companies have already disappeared. "We were able to shoot 3-D images of Jos. Robb's industrial leather complex, but by then all the machinery was gone," Piédalue says.

Some developers cooperate, such as Redpath's renovators. They have restored building exteriors and integrated historical elements into their project, after receiving municipal and provincial funding. A Parks Canada tour boat ferries visitors near what remains of the eighty-five Redpath structures once considered at the cutting edge of industrialization. "Until Redpath closed in 1983, it was like walking through cotton candy," Piché reminisces. "The air was so sweet."

Between 1852 and 1855, an unprecedented seventeen factories opened around the basin of the St. Gabriel lock, which still harbours the best ensemble of surviving buildings as well as remains of the 1825 canal. Here, not only Red-

From 1907, the canal



PARKS CANADA / F. MERCIER

Restoring Lock No. 3

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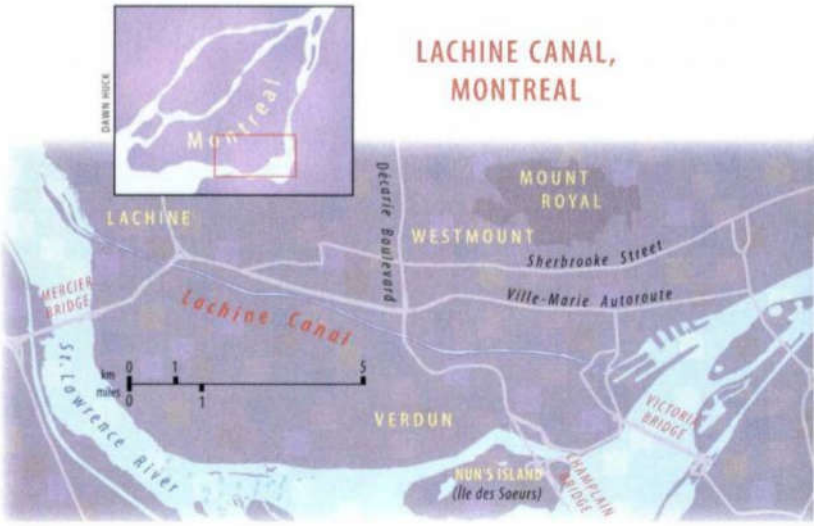
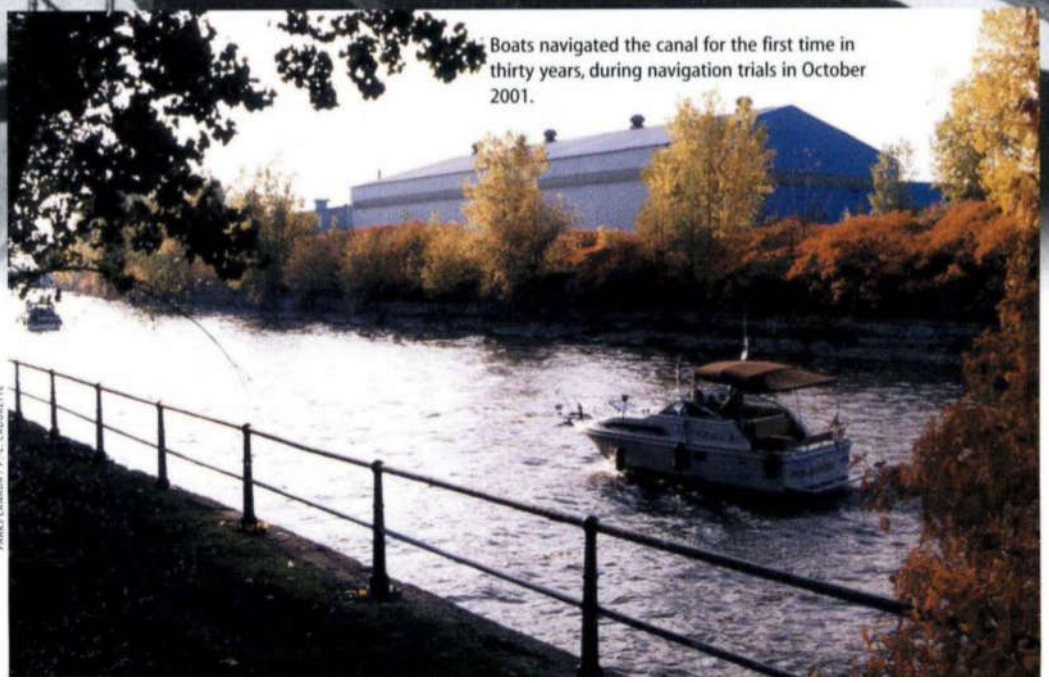


operated around the clock six days a week. . . . Up to fourteen thousand vessels passed through the locks seasonally.

View of Saint-Gabriel Lock, heading east, in 1910.



Boats navigated the canal for the first time in thirty years, during navigation trials in October 2001.

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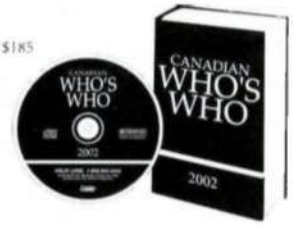

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path stands, but the origins of Five Roses, Stelco, Northern Electric (now Nordelec), and textile manufacturer Belding Corticelli.

A few metres underground, other vestiges rest alongside most of the canal. Unlike today, when soil is carted off to make way for underground parking, people used to leave demolished materials and build on top of them, sometimes on the same foundations. Fire twice razed the Brewster Sawmill, Canada's first industrial woodcutter. "The sandy earth has preserved drawings and notes on billboards," Montreal's chief archaeologist, Claire Rousseau, reveals. "When we uncovered the site, it felt as if people were still there."

While many ruins will remain buried indefinitely, at least two sites are being excavated with the aim of creating an archaeological park. It will display canal mechanisms and industrial machinery that can withstand Montreal winters. The current project also involves branching bike paths into neighbouring streets and excavating two flour-mill basins that had been filled. Interpretation points and visitor facilities will make exploring the canal easier for an anticipated 1.5 million people annually.

Everyone hopes the success of this first phase will lead to more funding. "Many canal walls are crumbling, and there's no major interpretation centre," notes Mark London, an urban planner with the Lachine Canal team at Montreal's parks department. "Several basins need to be reopened to turn a no man's land into an attractive site."

"It's a race against time with so much private interest in developing the waterfront," Piédalue warns. "We've only been able to provide an idea of what's there with the hope that it will lead to its protection." 🖼

Julie Gedeon is a Montreal writer with a keen interest in history. She is currently working on a book called *Iron Ladies – The Role of Women in Canadian Railways* for McGill-Queen's University Press.

et cetera

Parks Canada's website devoted to the Lachine Canal National Historic Site features a history of the canal and its restoration at <www.parkscanada.pch.gc.ca/canallachine>.

Reviews

Featured Books

■ **Le Livre noir du Canada anglais**
By Normand Lester
Les Intouchables, Montreal, 2001
303 pp., $24.95 paper

■ **Molson: The Birth of a Business Empire**
By Douglas Hunter
Penguin Books Canada, Toronto, 2001
512 pp., illus., $37.00 hardcover; $24.99 paper

■ **The Molsons: Their Lives and Times, 1780–2000**
By Karen Molson
Firefly Books, Willowdale, Ontario, 2001
384 pp., illus., $40.00 hardcover

■ **Way Out West: On the Trail of an Errant Ancestor**
By Michael Shaw Bond
McClelland & Stewart, Toronto, 2001
264 pp., illus., $32.99 hardcover; $22.99 paper

■ **Captain Vancouver: North-West Navigator**
By E.C. Coleman
Caedmon of Whitby, North Yorkshire, England, 2000
185 pp., £20 hardcover

Tales from the Dark Side

Recently I read two black books about English Canada. The first, Stuart Maclean's *Vinyl Café Unplugged*, was only black on its cover. Inside, it gives the happy face of English Canada. Reading aloud the story about the husband who tries to install an electrical outlet and eventually destroys his wife's kitchen in a rapture of power tools and male camaraderie helped my own wife accept the holes I made in our walls during my own home repairs.

A more sinister face of English Canada is reflected in ***Le Livre noir du Canada anglais*** by Normand Lester. The author was an experienced and respected Radio-Canada journalist who was fired after the book's publication. *Le Livre noir* is a response to the *Heritage Minutes*, which Lester calls "soft propaganda, wrapped in sugar." This book is intended to show "the other side of the coin, the dark side, the bloody side of history." He succeeds in this goal in a book that is infuriating for being so resolute to show only the dark and bloody, yet a book that is, nonetheless, worth reading.

Le Livre noir is a polemic and not history as I understand it—an attempt to help the audience understand the thoughts and deeds of those who lived in the past. Lester fails to give context to events and is selective and one-sided in his interpretations. For example, he writes forcefully about the demonization of Lucien Bouchard by English Canadians, but he gives no attention to the context of English Canadians seeing their country split apart. He gives no mention of the good will shown to Bouchard at other times in his career, notably when he was near death and lost his leg. No mention of Bouchard's own speeches that tended to demonize his opponents or make outlandish claims. And no mention of Jacques Parizeau and his famous attribution of blame for defeat of the 1995 referendum to the ethnics and money.

Other examples abound: a shocking description of the power of the racist Orangemen in English Canada, but nothing on the extremism of the Ultramontagnes. Macdonald's treatment of Riel and the Métis is also given a biased context while his acceptance of and cooperation with French Canadians is completely absent.

Lester's explanation of the past seems exclusively to serve his interpretation of the present. In Lester's eyes, the blatant bigotry in the nineteenth-century *Montreal Gazette* is unchanged today. And for anyone who might think that Lord Durham is irrelevant in the twenty-first century, consider Lester:

> In order to solve the problem created by English racist fanatics, Durham proposes the assimilation of the francophone majority. It never occurs to someone like Durham that the English should live in a democratic state with a French majority. *Noblesse de la race anglaise oblige*. Again today, the same mentality is found in the majority of Anglo-Quebecers. Their opposition to the fusion of municipalities on the island of Montreal is the most recent example. [my translation]

Despite its polemics, I recommend this book, especially for nonfrancophones. I found much new information, and though many of Lester's interpretations may be one-dimensional, they are well founded. For example, in the prologue alone, Lester quotes vitriolic opinions about Quebec from the editor of the *Financial Post*, Diane Francis, and cites evidence that Mordecai Richler was loose with his facts when writing against separatists.

Before reading this book, I was unaware that there is strong proof that Quebec fascist Adrien Arcand was supported financially by R.B. Bennett and the Conservative Party, or that Arcand was a devoted federalist. I was familiar with the prejudices of many English Canadians in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Canada

towards francophones and Catholics, but I was surprised at the depth of the bigotry. I had also forgotten a good deal about the sad story when Toronto troops machine-gunned residents of Quebec in 1918 during the Conscription Crisis.

Understanding the history of Canada means understanding a variety of different stories beyond the standard ones in one's own media and textbooks, with their own point of view and selectivity. *Le Livre noir* offers a story seldom heard in English Canada.

Reviewed by **Tom Morton**, a Vancouver history teacher.

The Black Book of English Canada, a translation by Ray Conlogue, is scheduled for publication by McClelland & Stewart in October 2002.

From Beer to Eternity

Two histories of the Molson family have recently appeared, and reading one after the other can leave you feeling as overfilled and groggy as having quaffed too many Molson products. Still, it takes both books to cover the entire Galsworthian saga of one of the oldest dynasties in Canada's high society.

In ***Molson: The Birth of a Business Empire***, Douglas Hunter chose to confine his attentions to the patriarch, John Molson, and his immediate offspring. After tiptoeing discreetly over the same ground, as befits a family member, Karen Molson, in ***The Molsons: Their Lives and Times, 1780–2000***, takes up the story where Hunter leaves off and carries it to the present day.

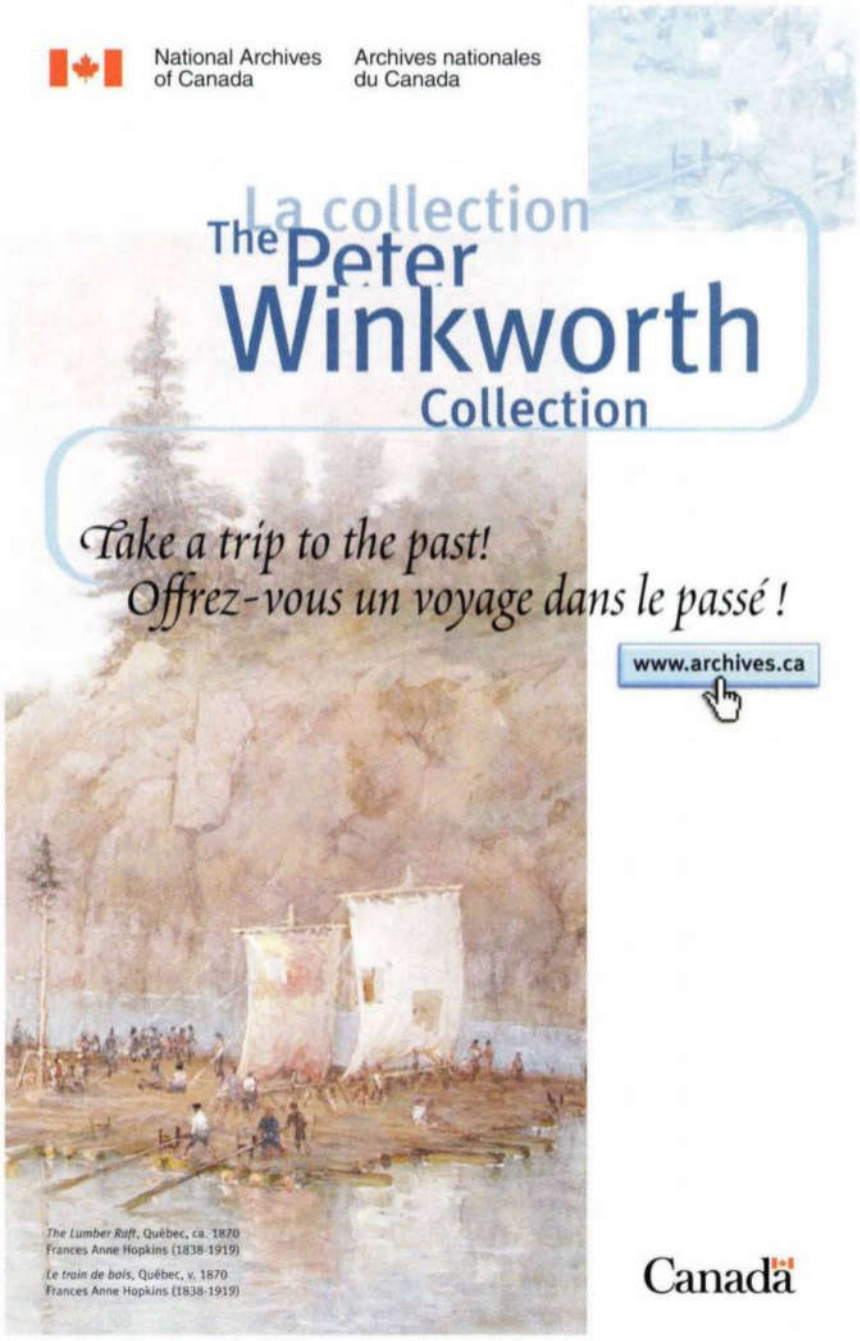
Known for his hockey histories (*Open Ice*, *War Games*), Hunter evidently feels obliged to expound on every last detail of his exhaustive research. Having dabbled in fiction, Karen Molson allows herself a lot more literary licence. She fearlessly mixes fact with legend and supposes what might have been.

Both works seek to emphasize the Molsons' economic, political, and social significance, but neither offers much fresh historical insight. What rescues both from mere worthiness, in fact, is the aura of scandal that always seems to hang around the super-rich.

Thus we learn from Hunter that John Molson played fast and loose with credit to start his Montreal brewery at age twenty-three, sold the ancestral manor in England out from under his siblings, and shared a bed as well as the brewing chores with his housekeeper. He had three sons by her in the fifteen years before they were married. He never mentioned her in his letters home, and eventually cut her out of his estate.

After Molson's first two sons wed their first cousins, he became concerned that one of the daughters-in-law might inherit the brewery. He bypassed her by bequeathing the property to "John Molson, son of my son Thomas Molson," in the words of his will. Thomas named two of his sons John to ensure that at least one would fall heir to the brewery. He then sealed a family alliance by marrying off his daughter to his brother's son.

Hunter presents an image of John Molson Senior as a cold, dour scrooge of a man who freely forsook old friends and associates. Molson quotes a dif-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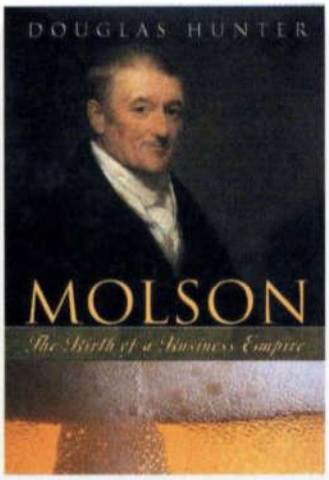
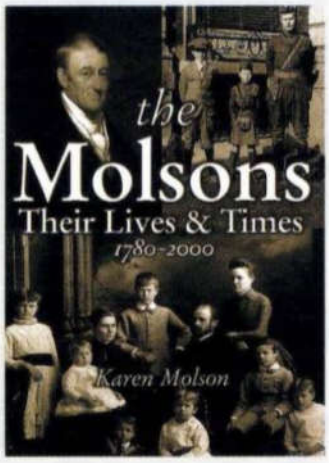
The Lumber Raft, Québec, ca. 1870
Frances Anne Hopkins (1838-1919)
Le train de bois, Québec, v. 1870
Frances Anne Hopkins (1838-1919)
Canada

ferent view from Lord Dalhousie, governor general of the Canadas in the 1820s: "He is a great treat, a speculative enterprising enthusiast, with a great share of quick and drole [*sic*] conversation and repartee."

If there are doubts about Molson's amiability, there can be none about his enterprise and enthusiasm. He brought mechanized transport to Canada with his riverboats, was a partner in its first railroad, and helped devise its banking system. He built Montreal's first high-class hotel and its first English theatre.

His sons carried on his progressive works, but when in 1849 they led a movement to annex Canada to the United States, they fell afoul of the Establishment. Later generations overcame this disgrace through conspicuous patriotism. The Molsons ultimately became so representative of Quebec's anglophone plutocracy that Molson's ale was excoriated as "horse piss" in the *Front de Liberation du Quebec*'s manifesto during the October Crisis of 1970.





In the meantime, as Karen Molson frankly recounts, the family had its share of tribulations. There were Molsons who squandered their fortunes, Molsons who married nymphomaniacs and alcoholics, Molsons who went insane, Molsons who committed suicide. One of them publicly engaged in a ménage à trois and went down on the *Titanic*.

At the same time, there were always some who gave almost as good as they got. Annie Molson established the first courses for women at McGill University; Dr. Alexander Molson risked his life treating the poor. When Percy Molson was killed in World War I, he left $75,000 to construct a stadium at McGill where the Montreal Alouettes now play under the sponsorship of Molson Brewery. A Battle of Britain pilot, aviation pioneer, and philanthropist, Senator Hartland Molson regarded his stewardship of the Montreal Canadiens both as a business and public service. He was furious when his nephews later sold the team.

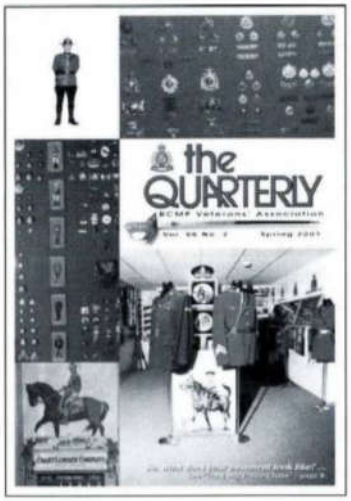
So, like all good stories, that of this mighty family empire is one of tension, conflict, and contrast. Hunter tells his part of it discursively and often irrelevantly. If Hunter errs on the side of density, Karen Molson's stuff is a bit too "lite," as they say nowadays in the beer business. On the whole, though, these two views of a fascinating succession of people balance each other off quite well.

Reviewed by Montreal writer **Robert Stewart**.

Forebear Follow-up

In June 1862, Viscount Milton and his friend Dr. Cheadle sailed from Liverpool on their way to British North America. After some diversions and preparations, they headed west to cross the Prairies and see the goldfields. When they got back to Britain they wrote *The North-West Passage by Land*. The book became a bestseller and is considered a classic travel narrative of the Canadian West.

At the end of the twentieth century, Michael Shaw Bond flew from Britain to Canada to follow the trail of his ancestor, Lord Milton. When he returned home, he, too, wrote a book on his journey – ***Way Out West: On the Trail of an Errant Ancestor***. Though the journeys were separated



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The Pierre Berton Award

Canada's National History Society established an award in 1994 for distinguished achievement in popularizing Canadian history. Canadian writer and popular author, Pierre Berton, was the first recipient. Mr. Berton agreed to having his name associated with the award in subsequent years.

In addition to Mr. Berton, other recipients of the Award are:

James H. Gray, Calgary, 1995
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The CRB Foundation, Montreal, 1997
Bob Johnstone, Toronto, 1998
(no award 1999)
Peter C. Newman, British Columbia, 2000
CBC / Radio Canada, 2001

This is an honour to recognize distinguished achievement in popularizing Canadian history whether to an English- or French-speaking audience. Individuals or organizations may be nominated whose work has brought Canadian history to a national audience through such means as publications, film, radio, television, theatre, or volunteer service. Nominations of works directed to a provincial, regional, or local audience, despite their merit, will not be considered.

Nominations are now being accepted for the 2003 Pierre Berton Award. In addition to the name and address of the nominee, nominations must be accompanied by detailed information in support of the candidate. A biography or curriculum vitae, newspaper or magazine articles, or letters of support outlining the achievements of the nominee would be welcome. There is no nomination form.

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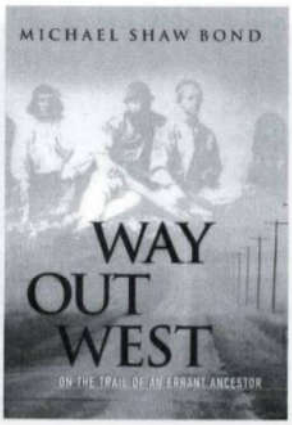
by 135 years, Bond has created an interesting interdependence of the one to the other.



The author has researched Milton and concludes that one of the factors that led to Milton's journey to Canada was epilepsy. He presents convincing evidence from family archives to show how this disease, which was considered shameful, affected Milton at home and on the trail. Despite Milton's medical condition, the author tries to present him as heroic rather than tragic. Still, he does not see his ancestor with rose-coloured glasses. He points out that some of the heroic events that made their way into *The North-West Passage by Land* are not to be found in Cheadle's personal journal of the trip. Hmm. Someone enhanced the events of his life to make it more interesting, more heroic. How surprising.

Bond warns us against looking at the events of the nineteenth century through the politically correct eyes of our own age. Some of the descriptions of Milton's hunting and the treatment of animals could shock the modern reader. Apparently, however, political correctness is not new. After the publication of their book, Milton was asked to lecture frequently, and the Royal Geographical Society did not hesitate to tell Milton to edit suitably. Michael Bond provides helpful information on the context of Milton and Cheadle's journey. He points out that Milton's attitude toward the natives they met was different from much of the prevailing negative attitude. Milton was even somewhat envious of the Cree way of life.

The parallel structure of the two journeys allows us so see how time has changed the people and landscape in the intervening years. Having met the same band of natives as did Milton, Bond observes: "It can be understood as a series of upheavals levied by nation upon nation and predictable one to the other, but the outcome seems too preposterous to be real and Milton could never have foretold it. Where there was freedom there are fences; where there were teepees there are bungalows; where there was Manitou there is God the Father; where there were buffalo there are none." To duplicate Milton's journey through the mountains, Bond had to deviate from the trail, as his ancestor's path has since become the Yellowhead Highway.

On each of their journeys or personal quests, the authors met wonderful characters. Milton and Cheadle met the guides La Ronde, Assiniboine, and the disconcerting "headless Indian." Their most notable cotraveller was the Latin-spouting, lazy, cowardly, proclaimer of doom, Frances O'Beirne. Bond met "The Coffee Mugs" of Shoal Lake, the Joseph brothers, and the Marlboro man – to note a few of the characters from both trips. We even learn of the personality of some of the horses. O'Beirne's horse Bucephalus – he of the falling-into-a-tree fame – has a mountain peak named after him.

The Irish have a phrase for an agreeable travelling companion: they say that he "shortens the road" because he makes travel so interesting. Michael Bond does this. He writes so well you wish he had been along with other historical travellers to make their journals lucid and entertaining. His self-deprecating humour and his research, which gives context, made me go back and read the original book by Cheadle and Bond's great-great grandfather, Lord Milton. Since there is a recently reprinted edition published by Prospero, anyone can do the same.

Way Out West is a delightful book that encourages us to read some of the original journals of western Canadian travel from an earlier period. I would love to travel with Michael Bond on the road or at least meet him in a coffee shop with the Shoal Lake Coffee Mugs.

Reviewed by **Rick McNair**, a Winnipeg storyteller, playwright, and director who lives in a tilted house full of books.

Vancouver, By George

Born in 1757, George Vancouver was just fourteen years old when he began his navy career under the command of Captain James Cook. It was on his second voyage with the famous navigator that he witnessed Cook's death on a Hawaiian beach in 1779. In his vivid description in ***Captain Vancouver: North-West Navigator*** of the confusing events surrounding the murder, E.C. Coleman portrays an example of a custom that many of today's readers will identify with. After listening to a demand that Cook's dismembered body be returned to the ship, a group of jeering natives turned their backs on the ship's officers and bent over to expose their bare buttocks.

Vancouver served the navy faithfully for nearly twenty years before he was placed in command of two ships, the *Discovery* and the *Chatham*. His orders were to explore portions of the northwest coast of America to acquire a more complete knowledge than had yet been obtained. Included with the orders were preliminary instructions for an important diplomatic mission.

By the late 1700s, ships from Spain, Russia, England, and the United States had been frequenting the northwest coast for years. A British fur trader, John Mears, had taken it a step further by establishing a permanent base in Nootka Sound on the west coast of what would one day be known as Vancouver Island. This didn't sit well with Spain, and in May 1789, two Spanish men-of-war entered the sound during Mears's absence, raised their flag over his house, and seized one of his ships. Two American ships operating in the sound were also taken, as well as two British ships that arrived during the action.

On the threshold of war, England and Spain negotiated an agreement, known as the Nootka Sound Convention. It included articles stipulating that Spain would forfeit her claims to exclusive sovereignty in the area and make reparations to Mears. Unfortunately, the details of the agreement weren't specific enough. The British understood that the sovereignty of Spain ended some two hundred miles north of San Francisco, while the Spanish assumed it extended further north, to a point in the Straits of Juan de Fuca. Entrusted with the task of sorting it out, Vancouver, a thirty-two-year-old sailor with no diplomatic training or experience, left the shores of Britain for the Pacific Northwest on April Fools' Day in 1791. It was his first command.

In many respects, Vancouver's expedition was a great success. But the unreasonable demands of the diplomatic mission, together with discipline issues with the crew, personal health problems, and an irreconcilable feud with the ship's doctor plagued him throughout the voyage. Some of these issues would remain unresolved for the rest of his life.

Upon his return to England in 1795, Vancouver learned that a young midshipman who had been sent home early for misbehaviour had become a peer of the realm. Thirsting for revenge, Thomas Pitt, now Lord Camelford, challenged him to a duel. But Vancouver declined on the grounds that he could not be held personally liable for decisions made while in a position of command. This answer didn't satisfy Camelford, who subsequently accosted Vancouver on the street and beat him with a walking stick.

In addition to being publicly humiliated, Vancouver found himself in dire financial straits. Reduced to half pay while on inactive duty, too ill to take on another command, and unable to collect nearly five years of back pay, he began writing an account of the voyage. If he'd lived long enough, publication of the account might have helped. But in May 1798, after writing close to half a million words, Vancouver died. He was forty years old.

Lacking footnotes, E.C. Coleman's book is clearly intended as a work of popular history. Unfortunately, a lack of sufficiently detailed charts makes it difficult for readers unfamiliar with the geography of the Pacific Northwest to follow Vancouver's journey. Proofreading errors add to the confusion. An area identified as Prince William Sound, for example, is identified as King William Sound a few pages later. In spite of these difficulties, readers with patience and an interest in the subject will find this book well worth the effort.

Reviewed by **Philip Jensen**, a Victoria writer.

More Books Worth Noting

- *A Century of Excellence: Krug Bros. & Co. Furniture Manufacturers*
  By Howard Krug. Natural Heritage / Natural History, 2001. $24.95 paper.
  The story of one company in one small Ontario town, filled with physical, financial, and personal details of manufacturing. Catalogue pages over the years reflect the changing fashions of home furnishings.

- *A Farm on the North Talbot Road*
  By Allan G. Bogue. University of Nebraska Press, 2001. US$19.95 paper.
  An eminent Wisconsin economic historian describes life on the Ontario farm on which he grew up in the 1920s and '30s. Detailed but never dull – and how fortunate that an American academic press chose to publish it.

- *Land, Power, and Economics on the Frontier of Upper Canada*
  By John Clarke. McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001. $75.00 hardcover.
  Focusing on the settlement of just one county, but always considering the larger political and economic context, this heavy (747-page) volume offers rich rewards to those who know enough to want to read it.

- *A Prophet in Politics: A Biography of J.S. Woodsworth*
  By Kenneth McNaught. University of Toronto Press, 2001. $65.00 hardcover; $24.95 paper.
  A reprint of the standard work of forty years ago, enhanced by a new introduction by Allen Mills.

- *Hidden Worlds: Revisiting the Mennonite Migrants of the 1870s*
  By Royden Loewen. University of Manitoba Press, 2001. $22.95 paper.
  A century and a quarter ago 18,000 Mennonites migrated from the Ukraine to western Canada and the United States. This scholarly study (originally a series of lectures) examines their experience.

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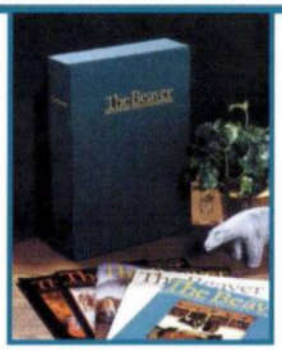

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COMING IN OCTOBER | NOVEMBER

FROM JACK TURNER'S WAR: LIFE ON THE FRONT THROUGH A WWI SOLDIER'S CLANDESTINE LENS.

- *Flying Under Fire: Canadian Fliers Recall the Second World War*
  Selected and edited by William J. Wheeler. Fifth House, 2001. $21.95 paper.
  A dozen pilots – eleven men, one woman – relate their personal experiences. Each chapter presents a unique tale – some humorous, many grim – that together show war at its worst and human beings at their best.

- *The Search for Heinrich Stief: A Genealogist on the Loose*
  By Les Bowser. Nimbus Publishing, 2001. $19.95 paper.
  An amusing adventure and detective story of sorts, as the author recounts his experiences in tracking his family's history in New Brunswick, Pennsylvania, and Germany.

- *Star of Courage: Recognizing Canada's Heroes*
  By John Melady. Dundurn Press, 2001. $21.99 paper.
  Since 1972, the Governor General has awarded medals, honouring citizens who risked their own lives in a conspicuous act of bravery. Here are the true stories of a dozen of them.

- *Photographing Canada from Flying Canoes*
  By S. Bernard Shaw. General Store Publishing House, 2001. $34.95 paper.
  The techniques, men, and planes are all detailed in this twenty-year history of aerial photography for surveying and mapping – more text than images, though the pictures are plentiful.

- *Alberta Originals: Stories of Albertans Who Made a Difference*
  By Brian Brennan. Fifth House, 2001. $16.95 paper.
  Vignettes of some sixty persons (including the "Famous Five"). Though each have "made a difference," each had different ideas, ideals, and influences.

- *Leonard and Reva Brooks: Artists in Exile in San Miguel de Allende*
  By John Virtue. McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001. $45.00 hardcover.
  Two Canadian artists moved to Mexico in 1947 and stayed fifty years, helping to found a renowned art colony, but also finding themselves embroiled in McCarthy-era politics.

- *Canada and the Ukrainian Question 1939–1945*
  By Bohdan S. Kordan. McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001. $75.00 hardcover; $27.95 paper.
  An examination of how Canadian officials and the Ukrainian-Canadian community responded to cries for Ukrainian self-determination and independence from the Soviet Union. Another chapter in the darker side of World War II.

- *The Contested Past: Reading Canada's History – Selections from the Canadian Historical Review*
  Edited by Marlene Shore. University of Toronto Press, 2002. $60.00 hardcover; $29.95 paper.
  Seventy years of the CHR, the journal in which Canadian academic historians write for each other, are sketched with excerpts from sixty-nine articles. The introduction tracing differing moods and issues through the years is in itself worth the price of the whole volume.

September 14, 1936: The Arrest of Dorothea Palmer

Woman Held Here In Unusual Case

Charged With Having For Sale Medicine For an Unlawful Purpose.

Arrested on a charge of having for sale, or for distribution, or advertising medicine for an unlawful purpose, Dorothea Palmer, who gave her address as 192 Queen street, will appear in Eastview police court on Friday morning. Miss Palmer, now out on bail of $500 furnished by a Kitchener resident said to be interested in an organization for birth control, was arrested yesterday by Sgt. Emile Martel of the Eastview police.

Sam Berger, Ottawa lawyer, has been retained to defend Miss Palmer.

According to her friends, Miss Palmer has been engaged in philanthropic activities for some years.

MISS DOROTHEA PALMER, 28-year-old social worker, whose 19-day trial at Eastview Police Court concluded this morning when Magistrate Clayton dismissed a charge against her of advertising birth-control information and contraceptives.

Feels Brighter Horizon Lies Ahead For Mason

Canadian Press Despatch.

HALIFAX, Sept. 15.—Modern

Dismisses Charge Laid Against Dorothea Palmer

Important Decision by Magistrate Clayton in Birth-Control Case.

Magistrate Lester H. Clay

On Monday, September 14, 1936, Dorothea Palmer, a twenty-eight-year-old social worker and part owner of a bookstore, left the home of Alda Mousseau in the Ottawa enclave of Eastview. Mrs. Mousseau was the mother of five children; her husband was unemployed. Like a quarter of Eastview's 4,000 residents, the Mousseau family was on relief. Eastview (now Vanier) was largely French, Roman Catholic, and working-class poor, and it was hit hard by the ongoing Depression. Miss Palmer was unmarried, English-born, presumably Protestant, and educated to the extent that she had taken some nursing training in the old country. As such, she would seem almost a trespasser in the Eastview community. But she was visiting Mrs. Mousseau for a purpose: She had come to advise the mother of five on birth control.

As she was leaving the Mousseau home, she was arrested. She was charged under Section 207 (c) of the Criminal Code, which in 1882 had made selling or advertising birth control a crime in Canada. She faced a maximum sentence of two years' imprisonment. Her trial, which would last twenty-three days and include forty expert witnesses, would turn into one of the most expensive and noteworthy in Canadian history.

By the mid-1930s, the campaign for birth control in Canada was beginning to creep from the margins of society toward the mainstream. The subject had long been taboo, and the campaign in Canada, with its lower rate of industrialization and greater Roman Catholic population, lagged behind that of Britain and the United States. By and large, physicians, the most likely sources of birth-control advice, were averse to the subject, believing contraception unnatural and a disparagement to motherhood. Even *The Ottawa Evening Citizen*, reporting Palmer's arrest on its September 15 front page, couldn't bear to be candid. WOMAN HELD HERE IN UNUSUAL CASE, the headline says cryptically. Palmer is charged with distributing "medicine," the lede declares. Lest readers be left completely befuddled, "birth control" receives a tangential reference halfway down the story.

But in June 1937, a few months after Palmer's trial, at the Canadian Medical Association's annual meeting, birth control is discussed for the first time. By midcentury, some forms of contraception are available under the counter in drugstores. Couples who can afford private physicians have access to prescribed methods of family planning. But there are setbacks: In 1960, a Toronto druggist is found guilty and fined for distributing condoms. The birth-control pill is introduced, but prescribed only for therapeutic purposes such as the regulation of the menstrual cycle. Finally, in 1969, the Liberal government legalizes contraception. The state, as Pierre Trudeau famously says, has no place in the bedrooms of the nation.

Miss Dorothea Palmer, "tall and good looking," as one paper described her, did not go to jail. Section 207 (c) of the Criminal Code had a loophole—it permitted acquittal if "public good" could be demonstrated. Palmer, court was told, had been working for the Parents' Information Bureau, founded by A.R. Kaufman, a Kitchener industrialist and birth-control advocate who believed contraception information should be taken directly to those who needed it most. The legal team he assembled prevailed over the Crown, and on March 17, 1937 Dorothea Palmer, "pale and nervous, her eyes ... brimming with tears" received the judgment of the court. Magistrate Lester H. Clayton ruled that she had indeed served the public good, a decision remarkable because it overruled generations of entrenched religious and medical objections to the dissemination of birth-control information.

By today's social values, Dorothea Palmer's, A.R. Kaufman's, and even Magistrate Clayton's motives have a taint. Eugenics informed the campaign for birth control in the Depression 1930s. The poor were many, and birth control was seen as a way of limiting the growth of the so-called lower classes. But acts have unintended consequences. Kaufman was a respected businessman. Lawyers and doctors paid him heed. And so, when Dorothea Palmer left court and "received the congratulations of her friends," the state began its slow retreat from the bedrooms of the nation.

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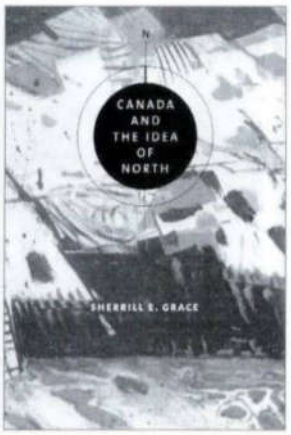
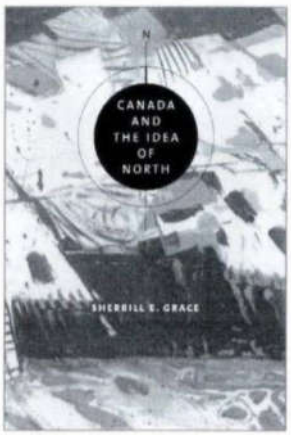
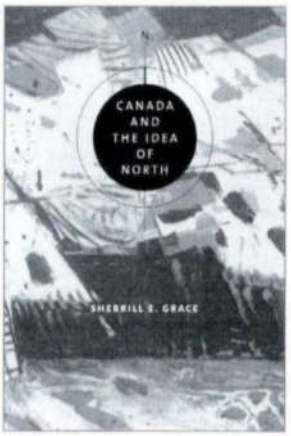
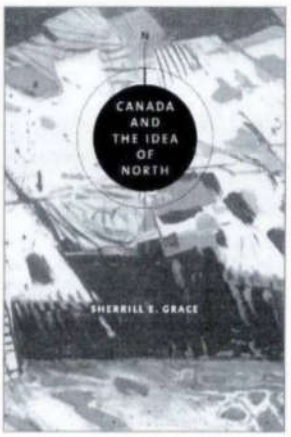
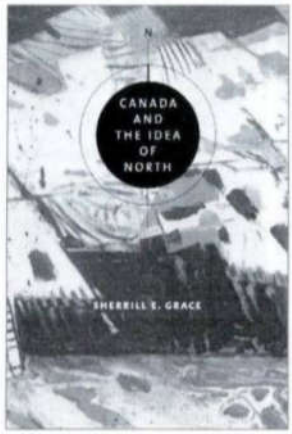




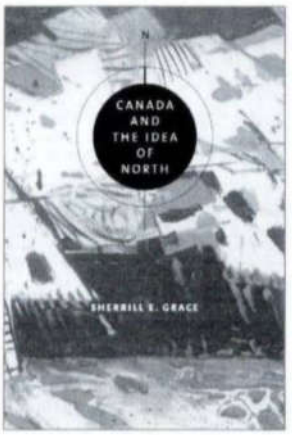


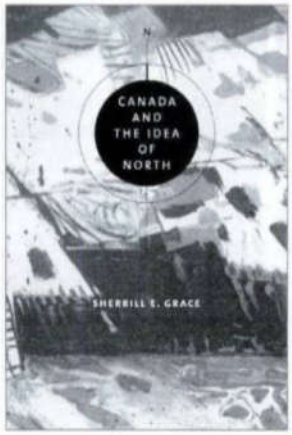


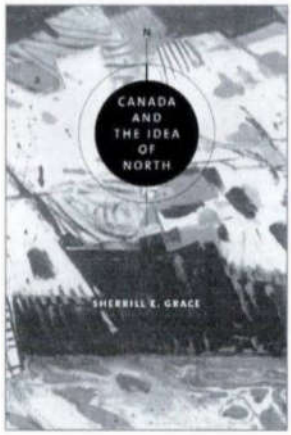


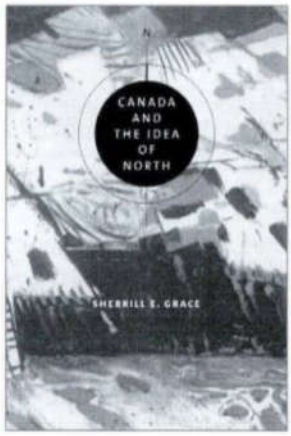
"With engaging style and elegant scholarship, Sherrill Grace celebrates the North as a place where we find our idea of home. Grace illustrates how some of our most compelling and contradictory representations of the north have taken shape in stories and songs, in theatrical performances and on film, in painting and photography and music. This is a remarkable book. Wonderfully well written, it takes us beyond the cosmopolitan commentary that characterizes so much writing about the north to a deeply moving reflection on the nature of belief. It is an essential read for all Canadians."

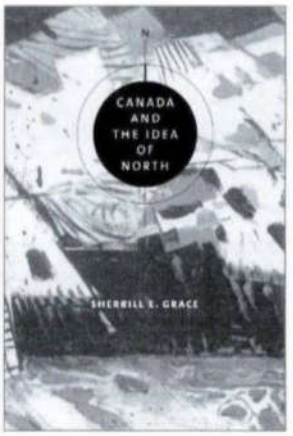
Ted Chamberlain, Department of English, University of Toronto











CANADA AND THE IDEA OF NORTH

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BILL WAISER

Encounter

He worked quietly in the shadow of naturalist John Macoun and his son James. But William Spreadborough's life was one of great accomplishment – and tragedy – says historian Bill Waiser.

William Spreadborough, 1856–1931: A quiet, unassuming backwoodsman, one of the foremost bird men of his generation.

I was intrigued by this gentle figure – why he seemed so content, if not determined, to shun attention and spend his life on the margins of society.

He was one of those faceless people from Canada's past – and now I had a photograph to go along with his fascinating story.

In the late 1980s, I was working on a book on Professor John Macoun's natural history work for the Geological Survey of Canada and kept coming across references in the research materials to his long-serving field assistant, William Spreadborough. A quiet, unassuming backwoodsman from Muskoka, Spreadborough had joined Macoun in the field for the first time in 1889 and spent the next three decades gathering faunal specimens in some of the more remote regions of Canada.

Spreadborough left no papers – just field notes. And any surviving correspondence consisted of copies of letters sent to him. It was readily apparent, though, from reading the Natural History Division annual reports that Spreadborough was the unofficial Survey ornithologist.

I was intrigued by this gentle figure – why he seemed so content, if not determined, to shun attention and spend his life on the margins of society. Was he seeking solace in nature – and from what? And what made him such a good field man?

A Spreadborough relative in Bracebridge, Ontario yielded a creased studio portrait of William, probably on his wedding day, sometime in the mid-1880s. He sported a full beard – characteristic of his generation – but it was his haunting, pale eyes that stood out.

Spreadborough lost his young bride in childbirth and signed on shortly thereafter as cook for a Survey expedition to northern Manitoba in 1888. There, his natural history skills impressed fellow expedition member James Macoun, who convinced his father, John Macoun, then Survey naturalist, to hire him the following season.

Spreadborough quickly became a fixture on the Macoun field parties. Usually the advance man in the field, he collected a wide assortment of animals, but tended to concentrate on birds, often working with arsenic to preserve the specimen skins. He also knew how to make the most unpromising campsite comfortable and was renowned for his bannocks and campfire banter.

But tragedy continued to mar his life. While riding in the back of a wagon in the Indian Head area in 1892, his specimen gun accidentally discharged and killed the driver; for many years thereafter, he looked after the man's widow and eventually married her.

Spreadborough spent his entire Survey career as a temporary summer employee. Despite repeated lobbying by the Macouns to have him taken on the permanent staff, he had to work at odd jobs every winter to tide him over until the spring and the start of another field season. But Spreadborough didn't seem to mind; he willingly dropped anything to take to the field with the Macouns.

Jim Macoun also tried to ensure that Spreadborough received proper credit for his work. In the 1909 revised edition of the *Catalogue of Canadian Birds*, for example, he drew special attention to Spreadborough's contribution. In fact, his words of praise confirmed what I had come to believe: this tireless field worker, largely unknown outside Survey circles, was one of the foremost bird men of his generation.

Spreadborough and Macoun worked their last field season together in 1919 when Jim fell seriously ill and died only months later from cancer. Spreadborough's heart for field work died with Macoun, and he was last heard from in 1922 working for the city of Esquimalt, British Columbia.

What became of him was resolved when the late Jack Cramner-Byng directed me to the Percy Taverner correspondence at the Royal Ontario Museum. There, I found a letter that related Spreadborough's tragic death the day he retired in 1931. "The feeling of uselessness was too much for him," Taverner told a friend, "and he hanged himself in his little workshop leaving a note for his wife that they had not saved enough for two; rather than live on in poverty, it was better that he should pass out. Too bad, poor old Spreadborough." ◘

Bill Waiser, professor of history at the University of Saskatchewan, is preparing a book on the 1935 On-to-Ottawa Trek and Regina Riot.

Canada's National History Society

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Morrison Appointed to Senior Society Post

Deborah Morrison has been appointed President and Executive Director of Canada's National History Society effective August 1, 2002.

Ms. Morrison, who is bilingual, brings to the Society an impressive administrative background and exceptional communications and development experience. A native of Winnipeg, where she attended Balmoral Hall, she received her B.A. in political science in 1986 from Carleton University and an MBA (Executive Program) in 1998 from Concordia. She has been an assistant to the Honourable Lloyd Axworthy in Ottawa and to the Ontario minister of Government Services in Toronto.

She is well-known in government circles, to corporate Canada, and in Canada's various history communities through her work with The CRB Foundation in Montreal, where she was director of communications and development, and the Historica Foundation of Canada in Toronto, where she was director of operations. She oversaw the CRB's Heritage Project, known for the much-admired Heritage Minutes seen on television and in movie theatres, and the Heritage Fairs program, the history version of the science fair, that is now national in scope. At the Historica Foundation, Ms. Morrison was the senior officer responsible for the administration of annual operations in excess of $6 million. She also developed its first fundraising strategy, which saw half the campaign goal of $25 million pledged in the first six months of the campaign.

"We're delighted to have found someone with that rare combination of business skills and a historical focus," said Jim Arnett, CNHS board chair. "Deborah has all the qualifications we wanted to take the Society to the next level in its development."

"I am impressed with the challenge and potential the Society has to offer," said Morrison, noting that the Society is the only membership-based history organization in Canada." I am looking forward to working with the board and staff to build upon the excellent base of programs that have been established in the last eight years."

She will also be assuming some of the duties currently performed by Joe Martin, the Society's volunteer president and chief executive officer. Mr. Martin will continue as CEO until his retirement from the board in June 2003 at which time Morrison will also become CEO. Mr. Martin has been instrumental in establishing the Society's fundraising and awareness activities.

Ms. Morrison succeeds Laird Rankin, the Society's founding Executive Director, who joined the Society August 1, 1994. He had requested a reduced appointment and will remain with the Society as publisher of the *Beaver*.

Deborah Morrison

Laird Rankin

Record Entries

The Governor General's Award for Excellence in Teaching Canadian History, a Society program to honour the best history teachers in the country, has received an unprecedented number of entries. When nominations closed at the end of April, 154 teachers from across Canada had submitted their names for consideration for the 2002 Award. This is an increase from last year's record of 122 submissions.

A panel of judges met in July to select six of the nominated teachers for the 2002 award. The six recipients will be announced in the October/November issue of the *Beaver*. In addition to being flown to Ottawa to attend an awards ceremony, each recipient will

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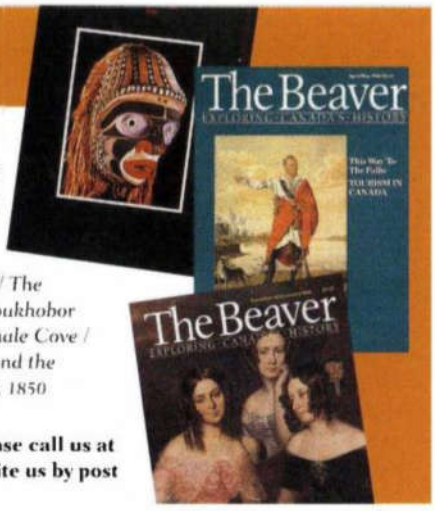

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receive a parchment, a medal, and a cash prize of $2,500. Their respective schools will each receive $1,000. **Bell Canada** is the prize sponsor of the award. Bell has been a faithful supporter of the award since the program was introduced by the Society in 1995.

Their Excellencies, the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson, Governor General of Canada, and John Ralston Saul, will honour the recipients with a ceremony and luncheon at Rideau Hall on Saturday, November 16.

Directors Reelected

James Arnett and **Charles Hou** were re-elected directors at the Society's ninth annual meeting in Winnipeg. They will serve for a second three-year term on the board. Mr. Arnett, of Toronto, is counsel, Fraser, Milner, Casgrain LLP. He was subsequently reelected board chair. Mr. Hou, of Vancouver, is a retired history teacher and the first recipient of the Governor General's Award for Excellence in Teaching Canadian History.

Brian Grose was reelected to a third term on the board. Mr. Grose, of Oakville, Ontario, is a director of the Hudson's Bay History Foundation. He was subsequently reelected chair of the Society's audit and finance committee.

A Year in Transition

Canada's National History Society will celebrate its tenth anniversary in 2003.

"Personally, I think we have prepared for this well," said Joseph E. Martin, president, in his remarks to the Society's annual meeting held in Winnipeg in June. He cited many structural and systems changes that were introduced or realized in 2001. At the board level, there had been a transition from one generation of directors to the next in 2000 and 2001; the role of the chair and the president was split in 2001 and the first full-time president was hired in 2002. This has led to better board governance, because of a dedicated chair and additional emphasis on fundraising and operational matters by the president.

The Winnipeg office has been reorganized, following a review undertaken by outside management consultants. As well, the Society's fundraising function in Toronto has been revamped in order to put greater emphasis on corporate fund raising. "In addition, we have also made our first major systems change since the Society was established in 1993," stated Mr. Martin, referring to a large investment in a new data-base system that will help consolidate the Society's work, save staff time and energy, and, most importantly, improve customer service.

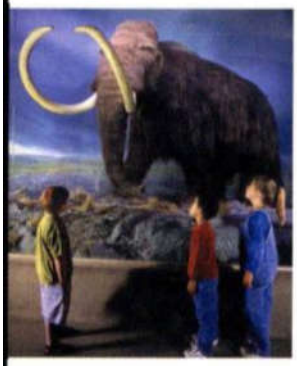
All these changes put the Society on a good foundation from which to launch its second decade.

Dining, cont'd

In keeping with its aim to become "a more national organization with an enhanced public profile," the Society arranged two more dinners in its series of such events for Society donors and friends of Canadian history. Society president Joe Martin hosted dinners in Saskatoon and Regina in April. The events were well attended and included finalists in the Society's Governor General's Award program and representatives of the Saskatchewan History and Folklore Association (SHFA). Bill Waiser, of Saskatoon, and Finn Anderson, of Regina, helped with the local arrangements. Mr. Waiser is a director of the Society and a professor of history at the University of Saskatchewan. Mr. Anderson is the executive director of the SHFA.

In a note of appreciation, James Pitsula of the department of history at the University Regina summed up the sentiments of the guests by thanking the Society for its "efforts on behalf of increasing understanding and appreciation of Canadian history."

Similar events are being planned for Saint John, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island in September. A dinner in Kingston is also under consideration.



Museum Profile

The Royal British Columbia Museum in Victoria is a place of discovery, where visitors can stroll through towering evergreens, see fish scurrying about a tide pool, or delve to the depths of the Pacific via submarine.

Since its founding in 1886, the Royal BC Museum has inspired the curious to discover the remarkable province of British Columbia – its natural history, the history of its First Peoples, and its modern history.

The renowned First Peoples exhibit is the only historical exhibit of Pacific Northwest Coast and Interior arts and culture ever created. The Modern History Gallery presents the material and cultural history of British Columbia from the 1800s until the present day. The Natural History gallery portrays the great range of living things and land forms in the province's coastal forests, sea coast, and open ocean zones.

In addition to the permanent galleries, the museum also features major travelling exhibits. Until January 31, 2003 an exhibit of artifacts and royal memorabilia entitled CELEBRATING ROYALTY will commemorate British Columbia's majestic heritage. Lions, unicorns, griffins, and other mythical beasts guarding the Queen's domain will set the imperial stage with an impressive large-scale Union Jack providing the backdrop. Thrones, art, ceramics, genealogical charts, and portraits are just a few of the commemorative pieces representing Queen Victoria, the early twentieth-century kings, and Queen Elizabeth II.

The entertainment doesn't stop with the museum itself. There's an IMAX theatre on site that features the largest film format in motion pictures.

Royal British Columbia Museum
675 Belleville Street, Victoria, BC V8W 9W2
For information contact:
Telephone: 1-888-447-7977
Website: <www.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca>

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- Dalnavert Museum, Winnipeg
- The Manitoba Museum, Winnipeg
- Western Canada Aviation Museum, Winnipeg
- McCord Museum of Canadian History, Montreal
- Pointe à Callière, Musée d'archéologie et d'histoire de Montréal
- Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull, QC
- New Brunswick Museum, Saint John
- Yarmouth County Museum, Yarmouth, NS

A discount of at least 10 percent on regular admission will be given upon presentation of your membership card. Some restrictions may apply. All subscribers to the *Beaver* are automatically members of the Society.

CHRISTOPHER **Moore**

Ten Books I Still Want to Read

Are things too quiet on the history front? Or is it just me?

I get a fair number of ideas for these columns just browsing along the bookstore shelves, looking for the "wow" response. "Look at this! I didn't know .... I've gotta tell the *Beaver* readers about *this*!"

It's a method I've thought bulletproof. But with apologies to a hundred authors whose terrific books have not caught my eye, I have to admit that lately I've *not* found myself walking away from the CanHist shelf with the book that is practically dictating a column to me before I'm out of the store.

I've consoled myself with a list of as-yet imaginary books that might have surprised and enlightened us.

1. How about a blockbuster biography?

American Robert Caro has just offered Americans a 1,200-page book on a ten-year piece of the life of Lyndon Johnson – and it's so much better for being so much bigger. It's been fifty years since Donald Creighton gave us 1,200 terrific pages on John A. Macdonald's long life. (Honourable mention: Michael Bliss on William Osler.)

2. Can we read some heroic native history?

Seems I've been waiting years for a really spectacular work of First Nations history. I don't mean land claims, or the reserves, or the conquest and dispossession. Those are vitally important, but a lot of that is current events. We need more of the greatness of native culture on the northern half of North America. I'm thinking of native glory: the wars and migrations of the equestrian peoples of the prairies, maybe, or a Six Nations history of the Six Nations. It would almost certainly require a great native historian to get the inside story, but I don't believe it's impossible.

3. Something new about New France

New France is at once so extraordinarily foreign and so close. It ought to inspire floods of books. It's been said Quebec's historians went so suddenly from being sermonizing clerics to tedious social scientists that they gave us nothing to read in between. And maybe something similar infected English-language writers too.

4. The New New Canada

Talking to kids – some kids – I sometimes think there is a pretty good argument behind their instinctive sense that everything in this country before about 1980 is ancient history. That whole no-ancestors, global-fusion, multiracial, hundred-channel, French-immersion, digital, urban, hip-hop thing really is a whole era of Canadian history and deserves a serious historian. The how-to eludes me, I admit!

5. A book about an idea

We've seen some startling successes by history books with unlikely organizing principles like longitude or salt. I hesitate to suggest possible Canadian takes on this technique, for it's really all in the doing. (Honourable mention: Brian McKillop's *The Spinster and the Prophet*, a book that is all about a book.)

6. Fresh takes on multiculturalism

There's lots of politically correct multiculturalism (and some better stuff too). But there's room for big dynamic books there. An oral history of the Hungarians of 1956 and the impact they had here? The human story of the Caribbean migration into Toronto since the 1960s?

7. A book to hide from the kids

Admit it, we all respect a subject a little more if there's a part of it that may go just beyond the pale, that maybe ought to be kept from the young and impressionable. Don't we have somewhere in our history a truly scandalous diary, or a love affair that really transgressed, or some public figure with a truly outrageous secret life? Put it between plain covers if necessary, but bring it on.

8. A book about the land that knows about history too

Some scholars are trying to bring into being a field they call environmental history. They want to link the changing way we live to the landscapes that are changing because of the way we live. From the Grand Banks of Newfoundland to the vanished orchards of the Golden Horseshoe to the tall-grass prairie to the old-growth forests of the Coast Range, there ought to be scope in Canada for some intriguing explorations.

9. Big books about our big cities

Is it fair to say there are lots of small or specialized books about urban history? I can't think of a single Canadian city that has had a really big, literate, readable, biography-of-a-place kind of book written about it. Peter Ackroyd's *London: The Biography* defeated me, but the concept is admirable.

10. Something spectacularly contrarian

In an old book called *1943* (D-Day came a year late is the gist of it), British author John Grigg says that he can see why the European powers, Japan, and the U.S. got into the Second World War, but that Canada would have been smarter simply to avoid the whole thing. More recently, Niall Ferguson wrote a fat book, *The Pity of War*, arguing that Britain could simply have avoided the First World War. I'm not much for crackpot history that wants to tell us Viking Druids buried the Holy Grail outside Peterborough. But we could use something that was solidly based, vigorously argued, and right out of left field that set us all arguing for a season. (Honourable mention: Brereton Greenhous's *The Making of Billy Bishop* may be as close as we will come.)

That's ten. Just one caveat. Bad writing kills the best idea and good writing redeems almost anything. Too many histories fall down on their own seriousness, or their modesty, or the delusion that research will be its own reward. I'll forgive a great deal in a book if it shows style and ambition.

But now: let's go back to the bookstore. Maybe there's something new to put this whole column out of mind.

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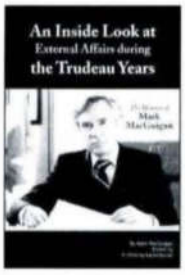

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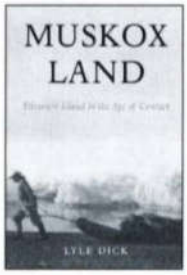

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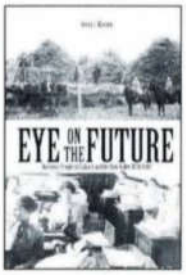

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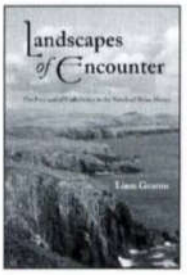

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Carol Duffus, who submitted this photograph to the *Beaver*, was a counsellor at Glen Bernard Camp in the late 1930s. She lives in Waverley, Nova Scotia.

Many Blankets They have laid their fire tepee-style, these pale-faced Indian maidens with feathered headbands. The faces of the older ones at the back, the counsellors, are daubed with paint, conferring, perhaps, their authority. Above them, next to the big rock, in buckskin, is their chief, the tireless Mary Edgar, writer of hymns and plays and founder and director of Glen Bernard Camp near Sundridge, Ontario, not far from Algonquin Park. It is 1938, and for the girls in the picture who have come from across Canada and the United States, the campfire is the ceremonial end of their winter-anticipated wilderness adventure. The canoeing and crafts and archery are over. In the long twilight of a Canadian summer's eve, familiar stories will be retold, rounds sung, maybe a chorus or two of *Land of the Silver Birch*. There are wieners to roast and, finally, in the glowing embers, marshmallows to toast to a blackened goo.

Tomorrow, it's back to the city. And soon, back to school.

Do you have an old photograph that captures a moment, important or ordinary, in our country's history? If you would like to submit it for possible publication, have it copied at your local photo shop (please don't send priceless originals) and send it to: Album, c/o *The Beaver*, #478 – 167 Lombard Ave., Winnipeg, MB, R3B 0T6. Include a brief description of the photo, including its date and location. If possible, identify people in the photograph and provide further information about the event or situation illustrated. To have your copy returned, please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

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	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
7:00 AM	THE CANADIANS					CANADIAN HISTORY	BEST OF CANADA
7:30 AM							
8:00 AM	SCATTERING OF SEEDS						
8:30 AM	ODYSSEYS					PAID PROGRAMMING	PAID PROGRAMMING
9:00 AM	CANADIAN ANTHOLOGIES						
9:30 AM	DISASTERS OF THE CENTURY	GREATEST JOURNEYS	GREAT TRAIN STORIES	SEA HUNTERS	DISASTERS OF THE CENTURY		
10:00 AM	HISTORYLANDS					HISTORY ON FILM	HISTORY ON FILM
10:30 AM	STREETS OF THE WORLD						
11:00 AM	THE CANADIANS						
11:30 AM							
12:00 PM	TOUR OF DUTY						
12:30 PM							
1:00 PM	HISTORY ON FILM					DOCUMENTARY SERIES	WAR STORIES
1:30 PM							
2:00 PM						WESTERN MATINEE	HISTORY ON FILM
2:30 PM							
3:00 PM							
3:30 PM							
4:00 PM	ODYSSEYS						
4:30 PM	HISTORY BITES						
5:00 PM	COMBAT (TO NOV. 9)					THE CANADIANS	WAR SERIES
5:30 PM	THE UNTOUCHABLES						
6:00 PM	HISTORYLANDS					KINGS AND QUEENS (ROYALTY ANTHOLOGY)	GHOST TOWNS
6:30 PM	STREETS OF THE WORLD						THE JOURNEY HOME
7:00 PM	TOUR OF DUTY					GHOST TOWNS	HISTORY'S COURTROOM (OCT. 13)
7:30 PM						THE JOURNEY HOME	
8:00 PM	CANADIAN ANTHOLOGIES					THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC HOUR	CHIEFS (SEPT. 29 FOR 5 WEEKS)
8:30 PM	DISASTERS OF THE CENTURY	GREATEST JOURNEYS	GREAT TRAIN STORIES	SEA HUNTERS	DISASTERS OF THE CENTURY		
9:00 PM	20TH CENTURY MONDAYS	ANCIENT HISTORY TUESDAYS	CANADIAN HISTORY WEDNESDAYS	HISTORY OF WAR THURSDAYS	HISTORY ON FILM	HISTORY ON FILM	HISTORY ON FILM
9:30 PM							
10:00 PM							
10:30 PM							
11:00 PM	CHINA BEACH						
11:30 PM							
12:00 AM	20TH CENTURY MONDAYS	ANCIENT HISTORY TUESDAYS	CANADIAN HISTORY WEDNESDAYS	HISTORY OF WAR THURSDAYS	HISTORY ON FILM	HISTORY ON FILM	HISTORY ON FILM
12:30 AM							
1:00 AM							
1:30 AM							
2:00 AM	CHINA BEACH						
2:30 AM							
3:00 AM	TOUR OF DUTY					THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC HOUR	CHIEFS (SEPT. 29 FOR 5 WEEKS)
3:30 AM							
4:00 AM	CANADIAN ANTHOLOGIES					WESTERN MATINEE	HISTORY'S COURTROOM (OCT. 13)
4:30 AM	DISASTERS OF THE CENTURY	GREATEST JOURNEYS	GREAT TRAIN STORIES	SEA HUNTERS	DISASTERS OF THE CENTURY		
5:00 AM	PAID PROGRAMMING						GHOST TOWNS
5:30 AM							THE JOURNEY HOME
6:00 AM	COMBAT (TO NOV. 9)						CABLE IN THE CLASSROOM
6:30 AM	THE UNTOUCHABLES						

Program changes may occur.